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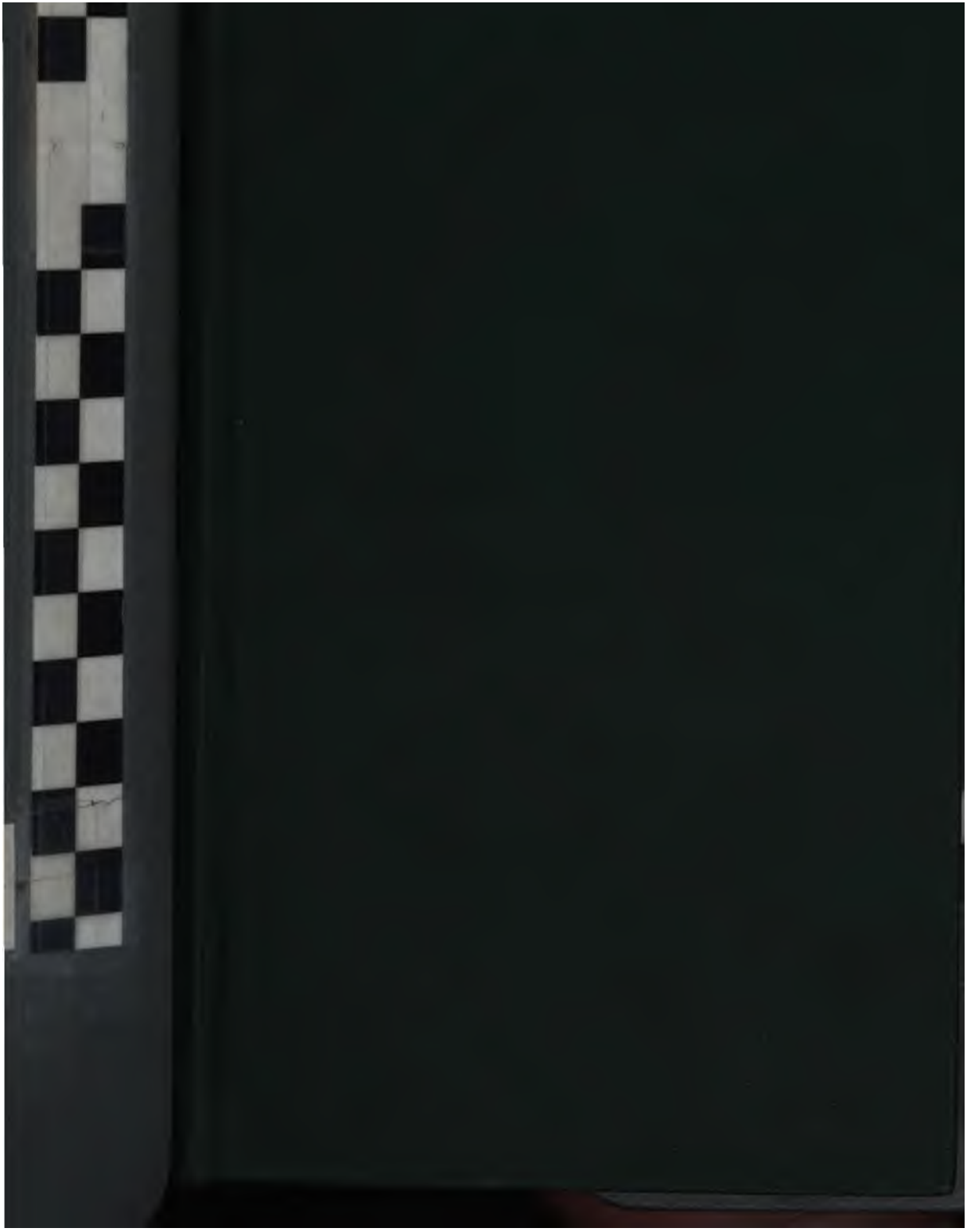

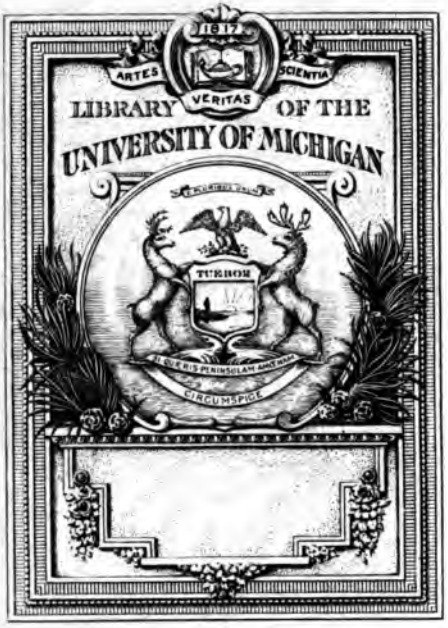
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MORLEY ERNSTEIN

OR

THE TENANTS OF THE HEART.

VOL. III.

MORLEY ERNSTEIN

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OR

THE TENANTS OF THE HEART.

BY

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"THE ROBBER," "THE GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL,"

ETC. ETC.

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MORLEY ERNSTEIN:

OR,

THE TENANTS OF THE HEART.

CHAPTER I.

We must now endeavour to give the picture of a woman's mind under deep affliction, as a contrast to that which we have drawn of a man suffering from similar sorrow. Juliet Carr sat sad and lonely in her own room at Yelverly, meditating over lost happiness and bitter disappointment. Her father's health was better—that is to say, he was stronger, able to rise, and go about in the immediate neighbourhood, though the surgeon shook his head, warned him that no great exertions must be made, and gave Juliet herself to understand that Mr. Carr was still in a very precarious state. It was a great

relief to her, however, to see his health even so far improved, for it removed the necessity of making that anxious struggle to do her duty towards him, by tending him in sickness, which she never failed in, notwithstanding his unwillingness to receive her attention, or be indebted to her care.

She sat, then, lonely in her chamber, thinking over her fate, and it must be acknowledged that sad indeed were all her feelings, and deep was the depression that rested on her mind. But very, very different was her endurance of the sorrow from that of Morley Ernstein. She was sensible that her happiness was gone for ever, her brightest hopes disappointed, the treasured affections of her heart, the first deep, earnest love of her young spirit cast away upon the ocean of Time—one of all the manifold things which in the course of the world are wrecked and perish in that engulfing sea. She felt her fate in all its bitterness, but she writhed not under the pang; she knew that it is woman's lot to endure, and she prepared her mind for a life of endurance. She wept often, it is true, but she prayed often, too. She prayed not only for herself, but for him whose peace was shipwrecked with her own—she prayed that God

might give him happiness, consolation, relief—that the grief which had befallen him might not drive his impetuous nature to seek for amusement or occupation in paths of danger or of wrong—nay more, that he might find others to cheer and to support him—that his fate might be brighter than her own—that he might not remember, nor feel, nor love as long as she must do.

For her own part her mind was made up; the day-dream of life was over to her; she asked nothing, she expected nothing from the future. All the aspirations of the young heart were at an end, and though she might expect some pleasures of a certain kind—in the doing good to others, the wiping away some tears, the relief of sorrows, the comforting and the consoling of the poor and the distressed — she dreamt of nothing more. She was well contented, indeed, to bound her hopes to the being an instrument in the hands of God to benefit her fellow-creatures; and if imagination did present a vision to her mind of anything like real joy for herself, if her heart did lift a prayer to Heaven for anything like individual gratification, it embraced but one bright object, it implied but one earnest petition that the time might sooner or

of two sisters. In regard to human affections—as indeed in regard to almost everything else—time is a mere relative term; for there are circumstances and situations which bind heart to heart in a few hours by ties more strong than can be woven by the intimacy of a lifetime. It is alone upon the deceitfulness of the world that is grounded the sad necessity of choosing slowly and thoughtfully the friends of the heart; but there are cases where the inmost secrets of the bosom are so clearly displayed that caution may be well done away; and generally it is in such cases that those circumstances exist which draw us irresistibly towards another, and teach us at once to love and to esteem.

So had it been with Helen Barham and Juliet Carr. In a few days—nay, in a few hours, they had known each other well, and loved each other dearly; and if in the character of Helen Barham there were points which Juliet grieved for, yet they were points which excited tenderness and pity rather than condemnation, and proceeded from errors in education, never from defects of the heart. When they had last met there had existed a difference in their state of mind, which was the only impediment to the deepest attachment. It was, that Juliet Carr

and talked together; she looked at her bright and sparkling beauty, almost as if she had been a lover; she read the deep, strong affections of those bright heart-full eyes, she fathomed in her own mind the well of intense feelings that existed in that soft bosom, and in her humility she asked herself—"What am I, that he should love me rather than her?"

Juliet went on with her enquiries, and demanded of herself, "Is it not possible—is it not even probable, that, knowing we can never be united, with his attachment to me broken by the cold hand of despair, his affections may turn to one who so well deserves them, and Helen Barham, happy in his love, may, in the end, make him happy likewise?" Not only was it likely, she thought, but scarcely to be doubted. It was impossible that he could see much of one so beautiful, so talented, so engaging, without learning to love her, if love for another could once be extinguished in his heart.

A pause had taken place while she thus thought, and Juliet saw her fair companion's eyes rest upon the green expanse before the house, while an expression of deep melancholy stole over her countenance. Juliet read that look, and read it rightly; and though she felt

somewhat timid, in regard to touching upon the subject at all, and sought not to raise any expectations, especially when she could not be sure that they might not be disappointed, yet she resolved, with the generous confidence of a pure and high mind, to let Helen know the exact position in which she herself stood towards Morley Ernstein. "I am sure," she said to herself, "that Helen will not rejoice in my disappointment. But, nevertheless, the knowledge that he whom she loves is not actually about to be united to another, may make a difference in her own fate and conduct."

Thus thinking, she fixed her eyes for a moment upon Helen Barham again, saying—"Dear Helen, you look somewhat pale and sad."

The blood rushed up into Helen Barham's cheek, from the well of consciousness in her heart. But Juliet went on, anxious to prevent her making any reply—"I am afraid, dear Helen," she continued, "that you are not very happy, though there never yet was one who more deserved happiness, I am sure. I can now sympathize with you, dear Helen, more deeply than I ever could do before, for I am not happy, either."

Helen started, and gazed eagerly in her face —"What is it you mean?" she cried. "You unhappy, Juliet!—you, whose days, I thought were to be all sunshine, blessed and blessing from the beginning of life to the close!—you, whose fate I believed was destined to show to man that it is possible to be happy, even on this earth!—you, who I fancied were to be for ever a being of brightness, and goodness, and joy!—you to be unhappy! Then, indeed, is this world a place of trial to every one; and, as old Comines says—'Right loyally has God kept his word with man, that in sorrow shall every one eat of the fruit of the ground, all the days of his life!' Oh, Juliet! this is very sad to me, for it takes away that belief in the mere existence of such a thing as happiness, which was all that was left to make me remember my own."

"Why should I be exempt, Helen?" replied Juliet. "I am not vain enough to think I deserved that which I believed was in store for me; and though deep and bitter has been the disappointment of all my hopes, yet I trust to be enabled, by God's mercy, to bear that disappointment calmly."

Helen Barham gazed earnestly and sadly in

her face, making no reply, for some moments; but she then said—"Speak, Juliet, speak; tell me more, now you have told so much; but do not, do not say he was unworthy, for that I can never believe, even from your lips."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Juliet, eagerly, with her whole soul coming into her beautiful eyes. "Unworthy! oh, no!—he is worthy of all the deepest, the tenderest, the most ardent, the most enduring love that even a woman's heart can bestow. But, alas, Helen, it is all in vain! He and I can never be united. Say not a word, dear Helen; for on this subject I must be very, very brief. I dare not speak—I cannot speak much, lest these tears should drown me. We can never be united, Helen; there is a barrier between us that cannot be removed; and my only hope, my only wish, is, to see him happy with some one who may deserve to share his fate."

Helen Barham cast her arms round Juliet's neck, and, for a moment or two, gave way to an overwhelming flood of tears. She made no comment, she asked no further question; and all she said, even in the end, was—"Oh, Juliet Carr—dear Juliet Carr!—would to God, that I might spend my life with you! I know not,

but I think that I might comfort you, as you have often comforted me; and that peace, Juliet—calm peace, which is all that either of us can hope for now, might sooner come to our dwelling if we were together. To be with you, even for a brief space, is a great happiness to me; and when your father sent for me—oh, how gladly did I come, although I had long tried to fancy that I was better away!"

There was a pause for several minutes, but at length Juliet asked—"Did my father, then, send for you, Helen?"

"Yes," replied Helen Barham. "Did you not know it, Juliet? He sent a messenger express to London for me, begging me to come down immediately, on business of importance."

"I never heard of it," said Juliet. "I thought you had come on your brother's account. But there are my father and Mr. Barham in the avenue. I will speak to you more about your brother, Helen, when I have an opportunity. There are many things of which I wish to warn you."

To the heart that deals with facts as they exist, and not according to the conventional mode of viewing them—to the heart that tries things by its own feelings, and not by the ap-

preciations of others to the heart, in short that feels and acts for itself, the world, and the world's customs, the idle apathy, the selfish indifference, the narrow calculations, the dark, and often stupid caution of that ordinary crowd which forms what is called the mass of society, must ever be considered as a host of natural enemies. Thus we close our bosoms against them; and when the gates have been unbarred for a moment, and the feelings have been permitted to issue forth, it is wonderful how soon, if any of the adversaries' troops approach, in the persons of the worldly and the indifferent, the soldiers of the heart retreat within the walls of the fortress, the drawbridge is pulled up, the doors and sally-ports closed, and everything is put in a state of stern defence.

Such was the case with Helen Barham and Juliet Carr. The traces of tears were rapidly wiped off, the every-day look put on as a veil, and the very thoughts with which they had been so busy were chased away, lest they might still affect the countenance, as soon as Mr. Carr and William Barham approached the house.

The old lawyer himself had become extremely thin and haggard since Helen had seen him, and though he had recovered sufficient strength

to drive to Doncaster on that very morning, he was evidently sadly broken and enfeebled. He met Miss Barham, however, with a good deal of that fawning courtesy which he always displayed towards those whom he sought to flatter and to win, and which was strangely, but not unnaturally, contrasted with the acerbity and sarcastic bitterness that he assumed towards those he disliked or despised.

The conduct of William Barham, on meeting with his sister, was such as the reader may very well conceive it would be. There was a shy coldness about it, a sort of schoolboy-awkwardness, which was mixed with an affectation of ease; and, through all, an enquiring underlook of apprehension was apparent, as if he feared that Helen might have been betraying his secrets to Miss Carr. In short, every word and gesture rendered their meeting painful, even to Helen herself. Indeed, for many months, each conversation between the brother and sister had added but one source of grief or another to the number which the more amiable of the two had to bear; but now she remarked not alone the unpleasant and ungentlemanlike demeanour of her brother, but that in personal appearance a considerable and painful change had taken place.

He looked thin and worn, and his face, which always bore a look of pale dissipation, was now marked by several purple blotches, in various places, and a bright red spot in the centre of each cheek. He had a peculiar cough, too, which Helen did not like; for she was old enough to remember something very like it, before her mother's death; and the course which Juliet told her that her brother was pursuing was certainly not one to improve his health and restore his vigour. After Mr. Carr and the young man had been about ten minutes in the room, the former left it, with a chuckling laugh, saying to Helen, that he had a little note for her in his desk. He returned almost instantly, and put into her hand a long slip of writing, upon which she gazed with enquiring eyes, finding it very nearly, if not totally unintelligible. "It is a sort of summons, my dear young lady," said the old man, "to appear, and give evidence upon the trial of those villains who broke into the house. It is all in proper form."

Helen Barham turned very pale, saying—"I thought I should have been spared this;" and sitting down with the document in her hand, she continued gazing upon it in silence, with a thoughtful and anxious expression of

countenance, as if placed in a situation of sudden and unexpected difficulty.

"Pray, Mr. Carr," she asked, at length, "was it on this account that you sent for me from town?"

Mr. Carr saw that he had pained her, and he was evidently not a little anxious to give her no offence.

"No, no," he replied, eagerly—"not entirely, my dear Miss Barham—not entirely; there are various other important things to be done. I must have your authority, as well as your brother's, to act upon. He is not quite of age yet, you know; and I have to consult with you upon a great many matters, though I have put your affairs into the hands of a gentleman, who agrees to take it upon the 'no cure, no pay' system. He sees his way as clearly as I do, and signs an agreement to stand all the expenses if he does not recover your property. Nevertheless, there is much to be talked about; and as to this affair," he continued, seeing that the first effect upon Helen's mind was wearing away—"you know, my dear Miss Carr, I acted for the best in giving you the subpœna here, where I was at your elbow to afford you advice and assistance. If I had not have done so, they

would have sent it to you in London, and what would have come of it then? Nobody can escape such a thing, you know, my dear Miss Carr; it is one of the bounden duties of Englishmen to give evidence for the purpose of promoting the ends of justice."

Helen sat silent for a moment, and then asked—"What are the consequences, Mr. Carr, of a person refusing to give evidence?"

"Oh, very terrible, indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Carr; "I can scarcely tell you what might, or what might not be done; but, certainly, in the very first instance, anybody doing so would be committed for contempt of court, and then they might stay their whole life in prison."

Helen's cheek turned very pale, and Mr. Carr continued—"When anything happens to make witnesses wish not to answer, they generally contrive to evade the question, to say they are not sure of this thing or that—to equivocate a little, in short."

"But suppose they do not choose to equivocate?" said Helen.

"Then they tell the truth," said Mr. Carr, sharply.

Helen was silent and thoughtful, but there was a look of resolution in her face, which made

Mr. Carr somewhat apprehensive that she would not act exactly in the way that he wished; and he was preparing all his eloquence to show her the dangers and inconveniences of the plan he suspected she was about to pursue, when one of the maids came into the room quickly, saying, with an impatient air—"There is an old woman, sir, at the door, wants to speak to you"

"I can't speak with her now, Sally," replied Mr. Carr; "she must come again."

"But she says she must speak with you directly, sir," rejoined the maid; "indeed, she is very saucy about it."

"Oh, I dare say it is that old woman, Brown," said Mr. Carr, "who says always there was five shillings owing to her son who died. Tell her it is no such thing, and that she had better go away, or I will send for a constable."

"It isn't Goody Brown, at all," answered the woman, in a tone of very little reverence for her master—"she told me something about her name, but I forget what it was."

"Go, and ask it—go, and ask it, then!" said Mr. Carr; and he was about to recommence his argument with Helen during the girl's absence; but she was not away more than a minute, and returned with a vastly indignant air,

saying—"The saucy old thing says she must and will see you directly—that her name is Jane More, widow of Sergeant More; and she will take no refusal."

Mr. Carr turned as pale as death, pressed his hand upon his heart, and sunk into a chair.

"You are not well," cried Juliet, starting up. "Let me go and speak to her, sir."

"No, no, no!" cried Mr. Carr, eagerly—"on no account. Take her into my little room, Sally. Some one give me a spoonful of brandy. Tell her I am not well, or I would have spoken to her at once, but I will come directly."

CHAPTER II.

As soon as Mr. Carr had left the room, Helen Barham turned towards the place where her brother had been standing the moment before—not, indeed, to ask his advice as to her future proceedings, for, alas, she did not respect that brother sufficiently to trust in any of his counsels!—but with the sort of enquiring look which nature has taught us to direct towards any one nearly allied to us, in circumstances of difficulty or danger. To her surprise, however, William Barham was no longer there; and Juliet informed her that her brother had quitted the room as soon as Mr. Carr began to speak of the robbery. "Indeed," she added, with a smile, and little thinking her words would give pain, "I perceive that he always does so."

Helen Barham looked down, for the knowledge which she possessed of her brother's former course of life produced some apprehension lest William himself might be by some means implicated in the terrible transaction which was about to undergo the investigation of the law. When she recollected the conduct and the words of Harry Martin, too, the probability seemed so great, that she actually trembled at the thought of what might be the consequence ; and the difficulties of her own situation became aggravated a thousand fold by fears for her brother.

Juliet remarked her agitation, perhaps with some surprise, but she made no observation, and Helen, as soon as she had recovered herself, left the room, saying, that she wished to speak with William for a few moments. She found him in the room to which she was directed by one of the servants of the house, busily engaged in packing up a portmanteau. He was looking extremely pale, and in answer to Helen's enquiries, said that he intended to go back to London the next day. He made some excuse for this sudden determination, which Helen did not clearly understand, alleging that it was necessary he should see "the lawyer;" but his sister could draw no far-

ther information from him, and, indeed, he appeared anxious to free himself from her presence. She remained for some time, however, trying to soothe him, and endeavouring to call up some better feelings in his heart; but she found that her efforts were spent in vain, and with sorrow of various kinds in her bosom, she returned to the room where she had left Juliet.

As she laid her hand upon the lock of the drawing-room door, she heard her friend's voice calling loudly from a little room at the end of the corridor,—"Helen! Helen!" cried Juliet; "pray send some of the maids. Come to me, dear Helen—my father has fainted!"

Helen ran into the room in which Mr. Carr usually transacted his business, and found him seated in a chair, as pale as death, with his daughter supporting his head.

"Something has happened," said Juliet, in a low voice—"something has happened between him and that woman who was here just now; for the moment that she was gone, he called for me eagerly, but before I could reach him he was in the state that you see."

Measures were immediately taken for restoring Mr. Carr, and in about half an hour they proved successful. He opened his eyes

faintly and looked around him, and then endeavoured to rise from his chair, but was unable to do so. He was very angry, however, when he found that a medical man had been sent for, vowed it was ruin and destruction, and reproached Juliet bitterly for bringing him, as he termed it, to poverty and disgrace.

Poor Juliet wept, not so much at the sting of her father's reproaches, as because she thought his senses were bewildered; for although Mr. Carr throughout life had displayed his avarice in acts, he had been very careful to avoid suffering the miser to appear in his words. He often, on the contrary, affected a tone of liberality; talked much about "petty savings," and people being "penny wise and pound foolish;" with all those old proverbs and saws of liberality, which are more frequently in the mouths of the greedy and the avaricious than of the really generous and open-handed.

Gradually, as he recovered himself, he became more guarded again, said that as the doctor had been sent for he could not help it, but at the same time put Juliet away from him with a cold air, and begged that she would not act in such a way another time without his authority. He asked, moreover, with a look of

doubt and suspicion, if she had seen that old woman, and seemed relieved when he was informed that such had not been the case.

The surgeon, when he arrived, would fain have sent Mr. Carr to bed, declared that he was much more ill than he believed himself to be, and protested that he would not answer for the consequences if his directions were not obeyed. Mr. Carr resisted, however, saying, that there could be no use of his going to bed then, as he must set off for York at six o'clock on the following morning, to be present at the assizes.

It was in vain that Juliet remonstrated, and besought him to refrain from an act which the surgeon assured him might cost his life,—it was in vain that she represented how little it mattered whether the men who robbed his house were convicted or not, if his own death was to be the result. He grew angry with her arguments, telling her that she knew not what she was talking about, and could not enter into his views, or understand his motives; and so far, at least, he seemed to be in the right, that the very exertion appeared to do him good, for during the evening he went about making his prepara-

tions with much greater strength than either Juliet or Helen believed him to possess.

He was pale when he rose on the following morning, and his hand shook a good deal, as if he had had a slight stroke of the palsy; but his determination of proceeding to York was so evident, that Juliet dared offer no farther opposition, and only petitioned to be allowed to accompany him. He did not comply with her request, however, saying, somewhat impatiently, that there was no need of increasing the charges at an inn. His daughter judged, and judged rightly, that the apprehension of expense was not the sole cause of her father's unwillingness to take her with him, and she did not venture to propose that arrangement which had but too often taken place between him and herself—namely, that she should pay her share from her own private income.

As soon as the chaise appeared, Mr. Carr and Helen Barham got into it, and the door was already shut when William Barham, who had been wandering about the house during the whole morning, as if not knowing what to do with his vacant time, ran up to the side of the vehicle, and spoke a few words to Mr. Carr.

The old man seemed surprised, but after a reply and a rejoinder, exclaimed—"Very well —very well, then—only make haste!"

The youth's portmanteau was immediately sent for, and strapped upon the carriage; he himself took his place inside, and the whole party were borne away in a very few minutes. To Juliet, who watched them from the window, the words which William Barham had spoken were inaudible; and she was not a little surprised to see the young man depart, even for a short time, without the ordinary courtesy of bidding her adieu; for, to say the truth, there had been a growing familiarity in his manner, which, though difficult to check, had been not a little disagreeable to her. On the present occasion, she concluded that he was going to witness the trial at York, and was glad of the relief; but she would have been still more surprised at his conduct, though even better satisfied with the result, if she had known that he only proposed to accompany Mr. Carr as far as the high road, and there to get a place in the first coach for London.

While in the carriage with Mr. Carr and Helen, William Barham maintained that sort of dull reserve which his sister's presence seemed

now to produce invariably, and only entered into conversation for the purpose of hinting to the old lawyer that he wanted a supply of money. With scarcely a moment's hesitation given to his habitual reluctance to part with money on any consideration, Mr. Carr produced his pocket-book, and handed over at once two ten-pound notes to his young companion, only stipulating that, when they arrived at the inn, he should give a note of hand for the sum which he had received.

"This man has been called a miser and a usurer," thought Helen, "and yet he deals thus liberally and kindly. So do people gain the reputation of vices that they do not possess."

But poor Helen Barham knew not, that for every shilling which Mr. Carr lent to William, he calculated that he would gain fifty, if not a hundred per cent. On their arrival at the inn, which occupied the angle where the by-road from Yelverly joined the high road from York to London, Mr. Carr and William Barham got out of the carriage; and the old lawyer carefully took a memorandum from the young man of the sum which had been given him. William then took leave of his sister, merely shaking hands as if she had been some common ac-

quaintance, and the chaise rolled on towards York, while Helen's brother remained waiting the arrival of the coach. When it came, he got into the inside, seeing that it was already tenanted by two well-dressed young women, and an elderly gentleman; and in a few minutes the youth was in full conversation, casting away entirely all that reserve which he had displayed in the presence of his sister, and giving himself all sorts of airs, as if he were the scion of some noble house, frequenting the first society in the land, and possessing wealth at will.

Fast drove the coach along the road, and faster went the young man's tongue, the innocent girls within the vehicle giving full credit to every word he said, though not particularly liking his manners and appearance, and their elder companion, with more experience and knowledge of the world, setting him down, not exactly for what he really was, but for some saucy shopboy, suddenly possessed of a few pounds, and raised in his own impudent imagination to the highest pitch of fortune.

At the end of about two hours, the coach drove up to an inn to change horses, and at the same moment a dark-coloured, but highly-finished barouche, rolled rapidly past on the side next

to William Barham. The old gentleman who occupied the other corner, could only perceive that the carriage contained a man of a distinguished aspect, with fine features and a very dark complexion; but William Barham recognised with terror the well-known countenance of Lieberg, and saw that the keen dark eye rested upon him while the finger was raised and the brow contracted. He turned deadly pale, and became as silent as the grave.

The old gentleman remarked all this, and whispered to one of his daughters, "I suppose this vulgar young coxcomb is some valet-de-chambre, and if so, depend upon it that was his master who passed just now."

William Barham's sharp ears caught the meaning of the whisper, and his heart burned within him, but he did not dare to reply. His only resource was to betake himself to the outside of the coach at the next stage, and to drown the mingled feelings of apprehension and rage in five or six glasses of strong brandy and water, taken wherever the vehicle stopped long enough to give time for such potations.

CHAPTER III.

It was in the interior of the well-known prison of York, just after nightfall, that the prisoner Harry Martin sat by himself, having been permitted a long interview with his wife in the course of the day, and having apparently derived great comfort and consolation from her presence—much greater, indeed, than that which he had derived from a conversation with his lawyer, who had taken a view of his case not the most encouraging. During the first day or two of his imprisonment he had, to say the truth, felt a degree of despairing anxiety which he had never before known in life; not, indeed, that he had displayed any external sign of apprehension, unless it were a stern gravity of language rather dif-

ferent from his usual gay and reckless tone. But upon the whole he had been calm, talking with any one who saw him upon indifferent subjects, and seemingly not at all engrossed with his own situation, but only feeling the general impression of a serious charge. His demeanour altogether had much pleased not only the governor of the prison, but also the turnkeys; and the former declared that he had seen many a guilty man in his day, but he had never seen any who had less the manner of one than Mr. Martin, nor could he conceive that what all the London officers said of him was true; while the turnkeys, on their part, vowed that, whatever he had done, Mr. Martin was "quite a gentleman."

Although even in those days the prison licentiousness, commemorated in the Beggar's Opera and in the works of our older novelists, had been very nearly done away, yet a degree of licence existed in our gaols unknown to our stricter rule. The discipline of a prison was a very different thing then from that which it is now, and it rarely happened that a harsh magistrate interdicted a prisoner before trial from any reasonable communication with his friends and acquaintances. All that was required from the governor of a gaol was the secure custody of

the prisoner's person, and if that was properly cared for, few questions of any kind were asked.

There were hours fixed, however, beyond which any visits to the prison were not usually permitted, and it was with some surprise, therefore, that Harry Martin saw the door of his cell open a few hours after the ordinary time of admission.

"A gentleman wants to speak with you, Mr. Martin," said one of the turnkeys, and the prisoner, raising his eyes, beheld a tall and powerful man, wrapped in a travelling cloak, enter the room while the gaoler held the door for him to pass in.

Harry Martin was not one to forget readily a face he had once seen, but it took the reflection of a moment or two to connect that of his visitor with the events of the past; and ere his recollection served him, the door was closed, and he stood face to face with the personage whom we have called Count Lieberg. The moment that he became aware of who it was, the brow of the prisoner contracted, and he demanded sternly—"What do you want with me?"

Lieberg's dark, keen eye rested upon him heavily, with that sort of oppressive light which

seemed at once to see into and weigh down the heart of those he gazed at, and he remained for a moment or two without making any reply, as if to let the man before him feel the full force of that basilisk glance.

"When last we met," he said, at length, "you took away some papers——"

Harry Martin had by this time recollected himself, and he replied, with a loud laugh—"When last we met? Did we ever meet at all? That is the question, my fine fellow. You seem to me as impudent as a quack doctor, and I dare say are as great a liar as a horse-chanter."

"When last we met," repeated Lieberg, in an unaltered tone, "you took a pocket-book of mine, containing some papers of value to me and of no value to you. What has become of them?"

"What has become of them!" cried Harry Martin. "If I took any papers of yours, depend upon it that they are by this time what you and I soon will be."

"And what is that?" demanded Lieberg.

"Dust and ashes—dust and ashes!" replied Harry Martin.

"You make a mistake," said Lieberg, calmly,

"I have no intention of being anything of the kind. But listen to me for a moment, my good friend, and I will give you sufficient motives for making you change your mind in this business. Those papers are of great consequence to me; if they can't be found, the proofs of the facts to which they referred are the next important things to obtain. If you can furnish me with either the one or the other, you will benefit me and yourself too. Hear me!—you will save your own neck from the gallows—You will save your own life, I say."

"I would not, to save fifty lives," answered Harry Martin. "Come, don't talk to me any more about it, for I don't want to hear such stuff. You have no power to give life or to take it. You, who, if laws were equal, and punishments proportioned to crime, would find a far higher gallows than any of us poor fellows—you, who are a robber of more than money—a murderer of more than life—who gave you power to offer me safety, or anything like it?"

"The chance that placed me in the house which you broke into," replied Lieberg, "and the wit that made me lie quiet when I found there was no use in resisting. Upon my words

hangs your life, and I pledge my honour to save it, if you but restore me those papers."

"Your honour!" exclaimed Harry Martin. "What's your honour worth? I have heard some tricks of your honour, that make it of as little value, to those who know what is underneath the surface, as a coiner's shilling."

"You are in the wrong," said Lieberg, calmly, keeping still fixed upon him that peculiar look which Harry Martin could not prevent himself from feeling, notwithstanding all his daring hardihood—"you are quite in the wrong, my good friend, and are risking your neck, or rather, I should say, absolutely condemning yourself to death for the sake of a youth who has betrayed you, and who was the first to bring upon you the eye of the law."

"Has he betrayed me?" demanded Harry Martin, with his eye flashing. "Has he betrayed me? If I thought that——"

"I can prove it," replied Lieberg. "You have mistaken your friends for your enemies, my good man. Listen to me for a very brief space of time, and you shall soon see that you have not only done me injustice, but yourself too. All the information that you possess, with re-

gard to me and to my proceedings, has been derived from a youth whom you yourself know to be one of the most egregious liars in Europe, who has misrepresented my conduct to every one, even while I was acting for his own good. I should have supposed that you were too wise to trust to one word that he says, even from what you knew of him before; but surely you will not be foolish enough to give the slightest credit to the falsehoods which he has spoken of me, when you find that he is rascal enough to betray you without the least hesitation. Of the latter fact you may be quite sure, although he may very likely have bargained not to be brought forward at your trial. Take any means that you like to satisfy yourself, and you will find that almost immediately after the robbery had been committed, he went to the house of Mr. Carr, and has remained there ever since. You will find, also, that his sister has been brought down to give evidence against you; and every enquiry that you make will prove to you, more and more strongly, that it was he who pointed you out to the police as the man, even when suspicion had very naturally fallen upon two other persons."

Harry Martin walked up and down the nar-

row space of the cell, in a state of terrible agitation. "So, so!" he said, "this is the game! He shall smart for it!—I wish I had my hand upon his shoulder, that's all; but I will have my day, yet. Never mind—revenge will come, and it is sweet!"

"It is, indeed!" said Lieberg, with a tone of such earnestness, that no one could doubt he felt the burning passion, the hell-thirst of which he spoke, with strong intensity, notwithstanding the calm and indifferent demeanour which he so generally affected. "It is, indeed," he said, "and no man who knows how sweet it is, lets slip the opportunity when presented to him. The way before you, my good friend, is open, and easy; give me those papers, or, if you really have them not, furnish me with the proofs, which I know you possess, against the boy, William Barham, and you at once save your own life, and gain your revenge against him; for I tell you fairly, it is at him I strike."

"Pooh! nonsense!—don't talk to me," cried Harry Martin; "it's his sister you want. You care devilish little about him. Do you think to come humbugging me in that manner."

"You are mistaken," said Lieberg, sternly; "I may seek revenge upon them both, and so

may you, too, for she is as much your enemy as he is, and has come down for the express purpose of giving evidence against you."

"Not she!" cried Harry Martin; "that's a lie—I'll never believe it!"

"I tell you, she arrived in York last night, with Mr. Carr," replied Lieberg; "and, as you know, the trial comes on the day after to-morrow."

"She'll give no evidence against me, I'm sure," said Harry Martin, gazing down upon the floor, but speaking in a less assured tone than he had used before. "I don't think she would, if her life were at stake."

"If you are quite sure of that," answered Lieberg, in a meaning tone—"if you are quite sure that the fear of being committed, and of suffering a tedious imprisonment will not induce her to give some intimation of the facts, you can trust her, and make yourself easy upon her score. It were as well, however, to recollect all the arguments that may be used to induce a girl like that to speak what she knows, however strongly she may have promised you not to do so. In the first place, they will shew her, that, both morally and religiously, promises extorted under threats and the fear of death are

always held to be no promises at all, and quite in vain. They will get lawyers, and priests, and friends, to tell her all this; and then they will set before her eyes her duty to her country, and shew that everybody is bound, by the strongest of moral obligations, to aid in bringing an offender to justice. All the arguments, in short, which a poor gentleman, whom you call the devil, has supplied to make people betray each other under the idea of being very virtuous, will be used towards her, and with effect; and then, to back all these persuasions, will be held out the terror of the law, which is armed with power to punish those who do not do their duty to society. Do you think any girl will hold out against all this—against the arguments of lawyers, and friends, and divines—and most likely, against her own convictions also; and will quietly walk into a prison for an uncertain space of time, solely to save a man from the gallows whom she never saw but once in her life? If you do, my good friend, trust her—trust her by all means; you are the best judge of the value of your own neck, though probably there are some other people besides yourself, who may grieve for you, and who may be left destitute if you are hanged."

Harry Martin seemed shaken. He sat down at the table, he leaned his head upon his hands, and the workings of his countenance told how strong was the emotion within him. Lieberg watched him, with eyes terribly skilled in reading the passions and weaknesses of the human heart; and after he had paused for a moment, to let what he had said have full effect, he went on—"So much for the girl!—and you must recollect, that if she refuses to swear that you are the man, and assigns for the reason that her life had been spared, even that will tell against you, in some degree. Then comes her brother, and says all that he knows of you; then come I myself, and swear to you positively. Now, if you do what I want, you sweep away the whole of this mass of evidence at once, and, in fact, may be said to set yourself free."

"Why, how so?" cried Harry Martin. "How would that prevent her giving her evidence?"

"Do you think she would give her evidence against you, if by so doing she condemned her own brother to death?" demanded Lieberg, in a low, but emphatic tone; "and I promise you, she shall have that before her eyes, at all events."

Harry Martin gazed at him from under his

bent brows, and for a moment or two a variety of different expressions passed over the prisoner's countenance, from which the dark, keen eye of Lieberg could extract no information in regard to what was passing in his bosom. All that his tempter could divine was, that he was shaken, that his resolution wavered, though there was a certain look of scorn mingled with all the shades that flitted across Martin's face, which was not very pleasant to his proud companion. He failed not, however, to ply him with every argument, to tempt him by every inducement, and Martin sat and listened, sometimes gazing full upon Lieberg sometimes bending his eyes down upon the table, sometimes frowning heavily, and sometimes indulging in a flickering smile, which crossed his countenance like the lights that we occasionally see carried across the open windows of a house, the tenant of which we know not, as we travel past it in a dark night.

"Well now, sir," he said, at length, looking up with a softened look, in Lieberg's face—"Well now, sir, suppose I were to do as you wish, what surety should I have that you will stand by me, in the time of need?"

Lieberg bent down his head, speaking across

the table, and replied, "I will acknowledge this night in presence of the turnkey, that in seeing you, and hearing your voice, I have become convinced you are not one of the men who broke into Mr. Carr's house, at Yelverly."

"That might do," said Harry Martin, in a thoughtful tone—"that would go a great way; but don't you think it would be a lie?"

"A lie!" exclaimed Lieberg, with his lip curling—"Are you fool enough to suppose, that a man of the world cares two straws about the mere empty shade of truth, when a great and important object is to be obtained? Where is the minister, the statesman, the patriot, who ever dreams of the abstract truth or falsehood of a particular proposition? The greatest reformer that ever lived, who harangues multitudes upon corruption, and all the evils that afflict a state or a religion, will no more scruple to falsify the truth in regard to an opponent, or to tell a bare falsehood to gain an end, than a school-boy will to rob an orchard. Take them all, from Luther down to the lowest of your purity-mongers in this happy island, and you will find that there is not one of them who considers truth and falsehood, except in reference to the end they have in view. Away with such non-

sense between us—it is only fit for a school-mistress's homily to girls of twelve years old. I will do what I say, and that is sufficient; and ere your trial comes on, I will so contrive to tutor Helen Barham that she shall work your acquittal, without committing herself."

"That will do—that will do!" said Harry Martin, meditating. "But then, sir, I thought you intended to have your revenge upon this young woman. I should not be sorry to have mine upon that scoundrel, her brother. Now let me see; though we jump together in that. I should not like the poor girl ill treated at all —I don't suppose you would ever go to strike a woman, or to punish her in that sort of way, at all?"

Lieberg smiled contemptuously, and replied —"You cannot understand, my good friend, the nature of the revenge I seek; but be satisfied! It is nothing of the kind you imagine."

"But I should like to know what it is, sir," said Harry Martin—"I should much like to know what it is before I consent.—Anything in reason, but no violence!"

His tone was very much altered, and Lieberg marked with no light satisfaction that everything promised well for his purposes.

"Well," he said, at length, "my revenge should be this: to force her to be mine, to bind her to myself by ties she loathes and abhors—to bow her pride to the dust, by none of the ill-treatment that you dream of, but by caresses that she hates—ay, and daily to know that her situation, as my paramour, is a pang and an anguish to her, while she has no means of freeing herself from the bond!"

"Well!" cried Harry Martin, starting up, with such fury that he overset the table, "you are a damneder scoundrel than I thought man could be! Get out, or I will dash you to atoms!" And at the same moment he seized Lieberg by the shoulder, as if to cast him headlong forth from the door.

To his surprise, however, he found that, notwithstanding all his own great strength, he could not move him in the least, and that the dark man before him stood rooted like a rock to the floor.

"Beware!" said Lieberg, lifting up his finger with a scornful smile, as the prisoner drew back in some astonishment—"beware!" and at the same moment one of the turnkeys opened the door to enquire what was the matter.

Lieberg went out without making any reply, and the prisoner was once more left alone.

"Ay," said Martin when he was by himself; "now if they have a cell in the place fit to receive a man that has murdered his own father, they should put that fellow into it. How the scoundrel was taken in, to tell all his rascality!—I don't believe a word of it—she'll never 'peach. I know a little bit about women, too, and I'll bet my life she doesn't say a word—only those rascally fellows may get it out of her; those lawyers. I have seen them puzzle a cleverer head than hers with their questions. However, we will see: a man can but die once, and I'd rather do that while I'm about it, than give the poor girl up into the hands of such an infernal villain as that, even if I had the papers to give him, which, thank God, I have not!—for no man can tell what he will do when he is tempted.—I suppose it will go hard with me after all!" and with this not very pleasant reflection, Martin cast himself into a chair, and appeared to give himself up to calculate the chances for and against himself, with a heavy brow and a sad and anxious eye.

CHAPTER IV.

MAN, in his collective quality, is undoubtedly a gin-drinker, a lover of ardent spirits, a seeker of all that stimulates the palate, both mental and corporeal. The wholesome food of every-day life we soon learn to loathe, and even the excitement of the imagination by the mimic scene or tale of fictitious distress, is willingly cast away for the more potent taste of real sorrow and actual crime. How we flock to see the trial of any notorious criminal!—how eagerly we watch the workings of apprehension and anguish on his countenance!—how critically we examine the gradations of emotion, and fear, and awe, and despair, as they move the stubborn features, or make the strong frame writhe! How we gloat upon the deadly anguish

of a fellow-human heart through all the terrible scenes in the administration of justice, from the first examination of the captured criminal, to the last dread moment upon the fatal drop!

Is it then, indeed, that man loves to witness misery, that he enjoys the spectacle of agony in a creature like himself! No; no more than he enjoys pain in his own person when he drinks those burning things from which his infant lips would have drawn back, or eats those flaming condiments which set the palate in a blaze. Stimulus—it is all for stimulus! Stimulus that makes up one half of all the enjoyments of the passions, the great ingredient in strife and exertion, the incentive in the course of glory, the companion of ambition!

The criminal court at York was filled to the doors. The reporters for the London newspapers were all present, come down to the mart of excitement for the purpose of hawking it in retail over the whole country. Manifold were the lawyers present to hear what they justly expected would prove a curious case, and the rest of the place was occupied by a various multitude, not only from the city itself and the neighbouring county, but from various parts of England, and even from the capital. There

was expectation in every countenance, and each little movement that took place in the court created not only a slight rustling murmur, and a motion of every head forward to see what was taking place, but also produced the palpitation of many a heart from mere eagerness and anxiety for the result. A great part of the crowd consisted, as is usually the case, of women, and a more than ordinary interest had been excited amongst the fairer and tenderer portion of the community, by the rumours which had been circulated regarding the prisoner Martin. He had become, as it were, the hero of the day; and his long evasion of the officers' pursuit, his sojourn on the moors, and his capture in attempting to escape from a distant cottage, had all been magnified, and made the theme of wonder and comment, so that more than one penny pamphlet, containing an account of "the adventures of Harry Martin," had been produced from the brains of several marvelmongers in York. Then, again, there was the tale of his beautiful young wife and her mother having followed him to the place of his confinement; and a report was current that the old woman had been heard to say, on several occasions, that Harry was not guilty, and that it

would prove so; which created a very general belief in his innocence amongst the many whose ignorance of all the mass of crime that exists in this world renders them ever ready to believe that those who boldly assume virtue, are virtuous.

The first cause that came on was one of no possible amusement to any but the parties concerned; one of those cases of horse-stealing or sheep-stealing, which sadly try the patience of an expecting auditory, when something more interesting, if not more important, is to follow immediately after. The counsel, however, on both sides, were brief, the jury themselves were impatient, and that trial was soon over; for it is no less true than strange, that even in courts of justice the accidental circumstances connected with any particular case make an immense difference in the portion of attention paid to the investigation thereof, though the crime and the punishment remain the same.

The judges of the land, indeed, generally hold, as far as is necessary, that calm and dignified impartiality which preserves the same estimation of all things submitted to their judgment, without any reference to aught but that which is brought before them. Such is not the case, however, either with juries or with the gentlemen of the bar, and any vulgar crime will be inves-

tigated, judged, and punished, with a rapidity truly surprising, when the same act, dignified by the situation of the parties, or brought into notice by something new and striking in the mode of its perpetration, will occupy a court for whole days, and call forth the most profound affections in the breasts of jurors, councillors, and auditory.

The barrister who would conduct a trial for horse-stealing, with a light and flippant speech of five minutes, although, by the sanguinary laws of old, the life of the prisoner was in as great danger as if he had committed murder, would become impressed by the deepest sense of his situation, and speak by the hour together, if some great man were slain by the hand of an inferior; and the slightest touch of romance will hold a court for hours over a trial for murder, which would hang a dozen men for simple forgery in an hour and a half; and yet the responsibility is the same—the life of a fellow-being is in both cases at stake.* Although, perhaps, it no longer happens that "Wretches hang, that jurymen may dine;" yet many a man has a cause affecting his life, or his happiness through life, tried with no slight inattention, because he has not

* This is now altered.

committed some distinguished crime, or performed it in a remarkable manner.

At length, the expected moment came for the trial of Martin and his companions, and the prisoners were brought in and placed at the bar. All eyes were upon them, and certainly an awful moment must it be, when a man enters a crowded and expecting court, loaded with the charge of a heavy crime, waiting for the ordeal of a public trial, knowing that his fate for life or death is there to be sealed in a few short hours, and sees fixed upon him the thousand eyes of a multitude who have come there to pry into and enjoy all his emotions, to witness the terrible struggle, and mark how he bears his destiny. It must be a strong heart, or a hard one, that can endure that first look with calmness.

Very different from each other, in aspect and demeanour, were the four men who now advanced into the dock. Two of them hung their heads and looked down upon the ground; one of them gazed around with a faint and affected smile, nodding to some one that he saw in the crowd, and labouring painfully to appear at ease. Martin, on the contrary, came forward, looking straight before him, with his head erect,

his broad chest expanded, and his step slow, but firm. His brow was somewhat knit and thoughtful, but his air was frank as usual, and after having gazed towards the bench and the barristers' table, he turned his eyes slowly to the right and left, scanning the eager faces of the crowd with an unquailing eye and an unchanging countenance. The clerk of the arraigns then read the indictment, charging the four prisoners with breaking into the house of Mr. Carr, at Yelverly, and stealing thence various sums of money, and articles of gold and silver, and he then asked the prisoners severally for their plea.

Contrary to the expectation of all present, while the three men who had seemed most cowed by the aspect of the court, pleaded "Not guilty," in a firm and distinct tone, and gave an immediate answer, Martin paused for a moment, ere he replied, as if he had some hesitation, and then answered likewise, but in a low voice, "Not guilty."

It may seem strange, it may be called unnatural, but I believe that, at that moment, there was in the heart of the bold and criminal man, of whom I speak, a repugnance to tell a public falsehood, and to put in a plea that was not true. He would have given a great deal, as he stood there, to have been permitted to claim

the old battle ordeal—ay, if there had been twenty champions against him; but with all his faults and crimes, he liked not to say he was not guilty, when he knew himself to be so.

The jury was then called over and sworn, no challenges being made, and after the usual formalities, the counsel for the crown addressed the court, with a due sense of the responsibility that rests upon him who undertakes the part of public accuser. Not one word did he say to display his own skill, or eloquence, to excite the passions of his auditory, or to prejudice the cause that was about to be tried. He mentioned the facts of the robbery, as they had taken place, the evidence by which he intended to prove those facts, the circumstances which he thought might justly fix the crime upon the prisoners at the bar, and then left it to the jury to decide whether they were guilty or not, according to the impression produced by the testimony about to be given before them.

After the conclusion of the counsel's speech, a momentary interruption of the proceedings took place, and a report ran round the court, that one of the principal witnesses had been taken suddenly ill. The judge and the counsel for the Crown held some conversation together, the principal part of which was only heard by

those near them; but at length the former said, distinctly—"I think that such is the best course to pursue. It does not much matter to you in what order the evidence is taken, and, probably, before we have proceeded far, the witness may be able to appear."

The counsel acquiesced in the judge's view, much to the relief of the spectators, who had become apprehensive that they might lose their amusement for the morning.

The two witnesses first called were the female servants of Mr. Carr, who, together with the labourers who had come to the rescue of the inhabitants of Yelverly, proved the facts of the robbery, but could say nothing to fix the guilt upon either of the prisoners in the dock. The housemaid, indeed, dealt a little in the marvellous, and though her fellow-servant had declared that she was asleep the whole time, vowed that she had seen one of the robbers, and that he was at least six inches taller than any of the prisoners; which called from the prisoner's counsel the significant remark, that the maid's testimony would go far to fix the burglary upon the Irish Giant. He declined to cross-examine her, however, saying, with a nod and a shrewd look to the jury, that her evidence was very well as it was, and would be received for as much as it

was worth—but no more. Some of the prisoners smiled, but Harry Martin still remained grave, and thoughtful. His brow, indeed, gathered into a stern frown when the name of the next witness was pronounced, and Frederick, Count Lieberg, was called into court.

The foreign appellation, and the rank of the witness, caused a movement of curiosity amongst the spectators, and a slight murmur, in the midst of which, Lieberg advanced, and took his place in the witness-box, with that sort of calm and impressive demeanour, which bespeaks both attention and belief—very often, alas! where neither is due; for those who have been accustomed to frequent senates and courts, must have observed how much attention an empty speech will gain from an attractive tone and manner; and how readily a falsehood is believed, when the face of the teller bears the appearance of a firm conviction. Let the reader be sure that the lie is as much in the manner as the words, and that its success depends more upon the former than the latter.

Lieberg's handsome face, too, and fine person, the accurate taste of his dress, and his military carriage, all struck the spectators, and the court, and prepared them to give full credit to every word that he uttered. The

judge alone, long accustomed to remark the slightest changes of the human countenance—whose memory was, in short, a dictionary of looks—remarked a something when the eye of the witness lighted on the prisoner Martin, which made him say to himself—"There is hatred there." It was no permanent expression, but one that passed like a gleam of lightning, over his face, and was gone—a flash of the eye, a sudden convulsive curl of the lip, a momentary contraction of the brow, and then all was calm again.

After stating who and what he was, and that he had visited the house of Mr. Carr for the purpose of hiring some shooting in the neighbourhood, Lieberg went on to give, in a clear and perspicuous manner, and, as usual, without the slightest foreign accent in the world, his account of all that occurred on the night of the robbery. Nor was that account far different from the truth, for Lieberg well knew that truth is always more convincing than falsehood, and, consequently, he contented himself with as little of the latter ingredient in his story as was possible, consistent with his purposes. The only part, then, of his statement which was calculated to deceive, was that he had been roused out of his sleep by a scream, and was issuing forth from his room to see what it was,

when he received a blow on the head, which stunned him for a few minutes. He next proceeded to say, that on recovering his senses, he found himself bound, and, looking through his half-closed eyes, saw two men in his chamber, rifling his trunks and dressing-case. They remained there, he continued, for some time, talking aloud, and then went away, leaving him still tied.

"Have you seen either of those men since?" demanded the examining counsel.

"I have," replied Lieberg, firmly. "I see one of them now,"—and he fixed his eyes upon Harry Martin, with a stern look.

The judge smiled, as he saw the direction of his glance; but the counsel bade the witness point out the man, if he still saw him in court. Lieberg immediately held out his hand towards Martin, saying—"Of the four prisoners in the dock, the one upon the extreme right, I can swear to, as one of those whom I saw in my room that night."

As he spoke, he bent his eyes full upon Martin's face, and the prisoner returned his stare, with a look as proud and powerful as his own; and again a murmur ran through the court, as the spectators remarked the glances which those two men interchanged.

"Do you see in the court the second man who was in your room?" demanded the counsel.

"I think that the other prisoner, at the further end of the dock, is he," said Lieberg; "but I cannot swear to him."

After a few more questions, the examination in chief was ended, and Count Lieberg was turned over to the hands of the prisoners' counsel, who proceeded to cross-examine him at length.

It is a terrible engine, a cross-examination, in the hands of one who knows how to wield it properly. It is a sort of mental torture, for the purpose of making a witness confess the truth, but which, like the rack and the thumb-screw, has as often brought forth falsehood, as that which is sought to be elicited; and yet it is impossible, perhaps, to do without it. The proud spirit of Lieberg writhed within him at all that he was obliged to endure, during his cross-examination, but with the wonderful command which he possessed over himself, he covered, for a long time, all his feelings with an exterior of cold composure; revenging himself, from time to time, upon the counsel, by a bitter sneer, which made the court smile, though his own lip remained unmoved and stern.

He was made to go over and over again the exact position in which he stood, when he re-

ceived the blow that stunned him; and a number of questions were asked which seemed directed to puzzle the witness, more than to accomplish any other object; and then the counsel demanded, suddenly, whether he were not actually up, and at the door of his room, when he heard the scream he had mentioned?

"I have already said," replied Lieberg, "that it woke me from my sleep; and I must appeal to the court, whether this course of examination is to be persisted in?"

The judge, however, did not see that the question was at all objectionable, and the counsel had the pleasure of finding that he had irritated the witness. He then went on to ask him, by what signs and external marks it was that he recognised the prisoner; and he made him acknowledge that the faces of the men he had seen were covered with a black crape, and their figures enveloped in smock frocks.

"How was it, then," the counsel asked, "that the Count recognised one of them so rapidly? —was it by his feet, which might have appeared from under the smock frock—or was it by his hands?"

Lieberg replied that it was by his general appearance; and, knowing that his visit to the prisoner's cell might, sooner or later, be made a

subject of discussion, he determined, with his usual decision of character, to touch upon it at once himself.

"I remember him," he said, "by his general appearance, and also by another indication. I have told the court that I heard him speak for some time——"

"But," exclaimed the counsel, interrupting him, and evidently prepared for what was to follow, by some intimation from Martin himself—"but you have not heard him speak in this court; and I will now ask you, Count Lieberg, upon your oath—remember, you are upon your oath, sir—whether you did not visit this prisoner in York Castle, for the purpose of entering into a compromise with him, which would have nullified your evidence here this day?"

The counsel for the crown here interfered, and the court declared that the question could not be so put in such a shape, though the counsel for the prisoner asserted that it was necessary for his defence. The very discussion, however, produced what the keen lawyer desired—namely, a doubt in the minds of the jury; and Lieberg's eye gathered, in a moment, from the countenances around him, that an advantage had been gained by his adversary. He

decided at once upon his line of conduct, and, bowing to the court, said, with a degree of rapidity which rendered it difficult to stop him—"The question has been asked, and I am not only willing, but desirous, of answering it at once. It is very easy for a hireling advocate, by base insinuations, to affect the character of a witness, but the stain must not rest upon my honour. I did visit the prisoner the night before last; but it was, as I explained to those who gave me admission, for the purpose of hearing him speak in common conversation, with a view to make myself quite sure of his identity. He threatened me, it is true, if I gave evidence against him, and——"

But the court again interfered, in a peremptory tone, signifying distinctly, that neither the counsel nor the witness could be allowed to go on in the course which they were following, and Lieberg's cross-examination was soon after terminated, the barrister who conducted it being satisfied with the impression which he had produced, and which remained unfavourable to Count Lieberg; for suspicion is one of those evil weeds which, when once planted, can by no possibility be eradicated from the soil in which they have taken root.

Lieberg left the witness-box with a frowning

brow, but took a place in the court to see the rest of the proceedings. At the next name that was called, there were two hearts that beat in the court—that of the prisoner, and that of Count Lieberg; but it was the heart of the latter which throbbed most violently when the crier pronounced the words—"Helen Barham!" He looked round the people, and thought it strange to see the indifference upon the faces of all; for so intense were his own sensations, that he forgot the crowd were not aware who Helen Barham was, and that the name, for aught they knew, might appertain to some inferior person in the household of Mr. Carr. When she appeared, however, and lifted her veil, her extraordinary loveliness produced at first a dead silence, and then a low murmur of admiration. Helen's cheek, which was unusually pale when she entered, grew crimson as she saw the multitude of eyes upon her, and read in every look the effect of her beauty upon the crowd. To one, feeling as she did, that admiration was a very painful part of a situation already too terrible. She turned pale again—she turned red—she felt as if she should faint; and, while in this state, an old mumbling officer of the court put a book into her hand, ran over indistinctly some words she did not hear, and

then added, in a louder tone—"Kiss the book!" Helen obeyed mechanically; and, after a short pause, to allow her to recover herself, her examination began. The counsel for the crown addressed her in a softened voice; and while she spoke in answer to his questions, and detailed all that had occurred on the night of the robbery, the prisoner, Martin, never took his eyes from her face. At the same time, the dark light of Lieberg's—if I may use a term which seems a contradiction—poured upon her countenance unceasingly. It seemed as if he were trying to intimidate her by that stern fixed gaze; but Helen had now regained her composure, and proceeded unwavering, with her soft musical voice, in a tone low indeed, but so clear, that each word was heard by every ear. There was no backwardness—no hesitation; and there was not a heart in that hall which did not feel she was uttering the simple, undisguised truth. She told how she had been awakened; how she had seen the face of one of the robbers; how she had uttered an involuntary cry; how he had rushed towards her, with the intention of burying her testimony against him in the silence of the grave, and how he had spared her.

She paused for a moment, while a tear or

two ran over her cheek, and hers were not the only eyes in the court that shed bright drops.

She then went on to tell all that had occurred afterwards, till the period when she was left alone in Sheffield; and then the counsel took a grave, and somewhat sterner tone with her, saying—"Miss Barham, I feel deeply for your situation, after the promise that you have made, for the purpose of saving your life; but before I propose to you the question which I am about to ask, I beg to remind you, first, that no promise, exacted under fear of death, can be held binding for one moment; secondly, that you have a duty to your God and to your country to perform—to the laws, and to society in general, which duty must be accomplished unflinchingly; and I now ask you, by that duty, however much pain it may give you—Do you, or do you not, see in this court the man whose face you beheld on the night in question?"

Helen paused, and there was a dead silence through the whole hall.

"I will not prevaricate in the least," she replied, in a voice still firm, though her face was very pale, "and I know fully what I expose myself to; but I will not answer, in

any way, a question which endangers the life of a man who spared mine when my death would have ensured his safety. I will not say, whether I do see him or do not see him, and I will bear no testimony against him whatsoever."

Again there was a profound silence in the court; and then the counsel expostulated, and the judge, in a mild but serious manner, brought forward every argument which could be adduced, to persuade Helen Barham to answer the question asked her; but nothing moved her, and when he added a threat of using the authority with which he was invested for punishing contempt of the court, she replied in a mild and humble, but still a firm tone—"I came hither, my lord, with a full knowledge of what you might be obliged to do; and I have only to beseech you, in consideration of the circumstances in which I am placed, to deal with me as leniently as possible, believing that it is a firm belief I should be committing a great crime, were I to act otherwise, that makes me maintain a silence which, whatever it may be called, does not border in the slightest degree upon contempt."

The good judge looked down, evidently dis-

tressed and puzzled how to act. But the counsel for the crown—resolved at all events to gain some admission which might prove the fact he wanted to establish—demanded, somewhat suddenly—"Is it your final determination, Miss Barham, not to point out in this court the man whose face you saw on the night in question?"

"I did not say he was in the court," replied Helen, who had studiously kept her eyes turned from the dock ever since she entered—"I know not whether he is in the court or not. I merely said that I would not answer any question on the subject. If it were to affect my life itself I would make the same reply, for that life which he spared he has every right to require again, if by the sacrifice of it his own can be shielded."

"I fear," said the judge, "that the dignity of the court must be vindicated. Miss Barham, I warn you, that if you still refuse to give evidence, I must commit you for contempt, as the most lenient method of dealing with you."

Helen bowed her beautiful head, replying, in a low tone—"I know it, my lord."

"Let the warrant be made out," said the judge; "and let the witness be removed in custody"

As he saw Helen quitting the witness-box in charge of the officers of the court, Harry Martin took a quick step forward to the front of the dock, as if about to speak, but at that moment a warning voice was heard amongst the crowd, exclaiming—"Harry!"

His eyes ran rapidly round to that side of the court, and he saw his wife with her two hands clasped, gazing with a look of agony in his face. He instantly cast down his eyes again, and drew slightly back, while one of his companions in captivity whispered—"Well, that girl is a diamond!"

In the meanwhile, a pause had taken place in the court; and the judge, anxious to get rid of the impression which Helen's conduct had produced upon himself as well as others, directed the next witness to be called. The name of Mr. Carr was accordingly pronounced, the counsel at the same time asking some one who stood near if that gentleman were well enough to appear. Ere an answer could be given, however, Mr. Carr himself was supported into the witness-box, and was accommodated with a seat. He was deadly pale, and shook very much, as if affected by cold or fear; and he gave his evidence in so low a tone, that

the examining barrister was more than once obliged to bid him raise his voice. He, as the rest of the witnesses had done, detailed all that he knew of the robbery, but as his room was the one which had been the most completely rifled, he appeared to have seen more of the actual robbers than any one else. There were four of them, he said, and he had had a good opportunity of marking them well while they tied him to the bed-posts, and stripped his chamber of all that was valuable in it. He had not seen their faces, it is true, but nevertheless, from their general appearance, he could swear to them anywhere.

Towards this part of Mr. Carr's evidence, he seemed to become heated by the thought of the property he had lost, and he spoke much louder and quicker than before, but just then there was a little bustle and confusion on the opposite side of the court, and Mr. Carr raised his eyes. What he saw there no one knew, but his voice fell, and his countenance changed; and when the counsel told him to point out the persons who had robbed him, if he saw them in the court, Mr. Carr gazed into the dock with a vacant look, and shook his head, saying—"I do not think any of those are the men. The three on this

side, indeed, might be amongst them, but that man beyond"—and he pointed to the prisoner Martin—"was certainly not one."

A murmur of surprise, and it must be said of indignation, took place at the counsel's table, for lawyers are not easily deceived in such matters, and there was not one man there who was not perfectly convinced that the prisoners at the bar were the persons who had committed the robbery, and, moreover, that Mr. Carr knew it to be so. The examining counsel made one more effort, by asking Mr. Carr how he happened to be so sure in the case of Martin.

"Because," replied Mr. Carr, "none of the housebreakers were so tall and powerful."

"And yet," said the barrister, turning round to his brethren, "two of the other prisoners are taller than he is. My lord, I think it is inexpedient, after what we have heard, to call any further witnesses."

"I think so too," said the judge; "but I shall let the case go to the jury."

The prisoners declined making any defence, and the judge remarked it was scarcely necessary for him to sum up the evidence, adding—"A more disgraceful case I have never had the mis-

fortune to see tried." The jury, without quitting the box, returned a verdict of "Not Guilty."

The judge then addressed the prisoners, saying—"A jury of your country has acquitted you of a great crime, and I will not take upon myself to make any observation tending to impugn the only verdict it could return under the circumstances; but, at the same time, you will feel that there are facts connected with this trial which give it a peculiar character, and that the same are never likely to occur again. If, then, either or any of you have hitherto led a vicious or criminal life, let the danger you have now run be a warning to you.—I do not think, sir," he continued, addressing the leading counsel for the crown, "that after what has taken place, we can deal very severely with Miss Barham. Let it be notified to her, that upon due petition the court will order her discharge;" and he turned to his paper to see what was the next case set down for trial.

CHAPTER V.

"THE climate, not the heart, he changes who flies across the wave." So said the old Roman, some thousand years ago, and doubtless what he said was true, both in his own day, when men cultivated a firm, fixed spirit within them, and also in the present, in the case of some individuals, to whom has descended the gem-like hardness of the antique mind, on which lines, once engraved, are never to be effaced. Nevertheless, in the rapid change of scene, in the running from land to land, in new sights and new excitements, in the companionship of fresh acquaintances, and even in the every-hour collision with our fellow-creatures which takes place only in travelling, one wears away the sharpness of some sorrows, as the gem which has

rolled for ages in the waters of the Tiber, or which is cast up by the waves of the Ægean Sea, though it retains the figures which were cut into it ages ago, loses the sharp outline that it received from the graver's tool.

As there is scarcely a plant on earth from which the bee cannot extract honey, so there is scarcely a scene in the wide world from which the mind that seeks real wisdom cannot draw a moral; and every moral has its consolation. The very aspect of strange cities, whatever be the grief in our heart at the time, brings its comfort, derived we seldom examine how, and often mistake when we do examine, but wrought out justly and reasonably, by the silent working of that spirit within us, which, if we would let it, would always deduce its homily from every object of the senses. We wander through the streets of a great town, we gaze up at the tall houses, we mingle with the busy crowd, we see the sunshine streaming upon some mansions, and the deep shade resting upon others; at one window we behold a group of merry faces, at another the close-drawn curtain, indicative of sickness, anguish, and death. From the one door, with tabor, and pipe, and garlands, and scattered flowers, goes forth the

bride to the altar; from another, streams out the dark procession of the grave. On each countenance that we meet is written some tale of joy or sorrow; each street has its history, each dwelling presents an episode in the great poem of human life. We return to our own chamber with a calmness in our sorrows, with a resignation in our melancholy that we have not before felt—and why?

Is it the universality of human misery that gives us a false support? Is it, as the most misanthropical of philosophers has declared, that there is comfort for each man in the sorrows of his fellow-creatures? Is this the process by which we derive consolation from mingling in the busy haunts of unknown races of beings like ourselves, and discovering the same cares, pursuits, and joys, and griefs throughout the world?

Oh, no!—it is, that we are taught our own littleness, as one individual ant in a whole ant-hill; and from the sense of our own littleness we gain humility, and from humility resignation, and from resignation love and admiration for that great God who made the wondrous universe, of which we are an atom—some knowledge of his power—some trust in his

wisdom—confidence in his goodness, and some hope in his protecting arm.

Who is there that has ever stood amongst the multitudes of a strange city, that has not asked himself—"What am I in the midst of all these? what are all these to the God that made them? and is not that God mine?" There may be such, but those who seek it will ever find, in the contemplation of any scene where the workings of Almighty will are displayed, some balm for those wounds which almost every man, in the great warfare of the world, carries about beneath his armour; for—to end as we have begun—there is a drop of honey in every flower.

Morley Ernstein had executed his purpose; he had quitted England to search—not for happiness, but for forgetfulness—not forgetfulness of her he loved, but forgetfulness of himself and of his situation. But alas, reader, it must be acknowledged, he sought not the drop of honey in the way that it might most easily be found! The same impatient spirit was upon him, which rebelled against the share of human sorrow that was allotted to him; and, full of its suggestions he struggled to drown thought and reflection, rather than to find comfort by their aid. Pride, too, as we have shewn, had

its share in his feelings; he was angry with himself that his heart had bent before any blow. He accused himself of weakness, not knowing where he was really weak; he strove to steel his bosom, and, in fact, only hardened his external demeanour.

A fit of illness which overtook him at Calais, of no very serious character or long duration, only served to increase his irritation and impatience. He had been angry before with the weakness of his mind, as he called it; he now felt a degree of scorn at himself and at human nature, for that weakness of body which yields to any of the trifling accidents of air and climate; and the very irritation which he felt, increased and prolonged the sickness under which he laboured.

At length, however, he was convalescent, and being permitted to go out for an hour or two, walked forth into the town, thinking that in its streets he might find something to call his mind away from himself. But little indeed can the good town, whose name was written upon Mary's heart, display, even to the eyes of an Englishman, to occupy or interest him for a moment. It is a sad, dull place, but in those days the communication

between France and England having been interrupted for many years, and only opened for a few, there was a kind of local colouring about Calais which supplied the want of other attractions. There one saw a great many things that one had never beheld before. Postilions were to be found with enormous pigtails, and as much wood as leather in their boots; ropes served for harness, and peasant women came to market covered with great ornaments of gold. The contrast, indeed, was strong between the two sides of the water, and Morley Ernstein's eye soon became occupied, even when he believed his mind was taking no part in any of the objects around him.

The dull lethargy which comes upon the spirit of man under the influence of any bitter disappointment, is never so easily thrown off as when fancy is awakened by some of the magic tones of association. There are few places in this good world that are not linked on to some interesting event in history, and even the small, dull town of Calais itself figures in the records of the past on more than one important occasion. Nothing, however, presented itself, in the aspect of the place, or in anything on which his eye rested, that could carry the mind of Morley

Ernstein away to other days, till he paused for a moment, after a ramble round the market-place, before a bronze bust, which is not easily to be passed unnoticed.

There are some heads, as the reader must often have remarked, which are very beautiful in painting, but which lose all their interest when sculptured; there are others, however, which seem to demand the marble or the bronze; and if we compare accurately the busts that have come down to us from ancient times with the history of the persons whom they represent, we shall find that the man of fixed and powerful thoughts, of stern and rigid determination, affords almost always the best subject for the statuary, as if the character of his mind required something analogous to receive the expression which it gave to his features. Of all the heads in modern times, perhaps that of the Cardinal de Richelieu was the one which afforded the finest subject for the sculptor. All the paintings of him are weak when compared to his character; it is in bronze that his image ought to go down to posterity.

The moment Morley's eyes fixed upon his bust, the lightning of the mind flashed back into the chasm of past years—the scenes of

other days, the block, the axe, the chamber of the torture, and all the dark implements with which that terrible man built up the fabric of his greatness, came before his eyes in a moment, and, for the first time since the cloud of sorrow had fallen upon him, his spirit found a momentary sunshine in the memories of ancient lore.

He stood and gazed, then, with his arms folded on his chest, while the people walking to and fro passed and repassed him, and many a one commented as they went, and assigned him a history and a character from their own imagination. How seldom is it, in the busy world with which we mingle, that any of the conjectures regarding our thoughts, our feelings, our state of existence, are correct! How rarely, from any of the indications that man's external demeanour affords to society, can one single trait of the heart's countenance be divined! Alas, dear reader, that it should be so! but to one another we all wear a mask.

One man, as he passed by Morley Ernstein, and saw the traces of care and thought on his countenance, settled it at once that he was some young prodigal flying from his creditors—a very natural supposition in the town of Calais

or Boulogne. Another, moralizing with a friend who walked beside him, declared, from his youth, his gloomy look, and his distinguished attire, that he must have killed his best friend in a duel, or committed some of those other dark crimes which society never punishes, but conscience, sooner or later, always does; another set him down for an indifferent *milor*:

> " Parfait Anglais voyageant sans dessein
> Achetant cher des modernes antiques
> Regardant tout avec un air hautain
> Méprisant les saints et leurs reliques."

But at that moment there was one near him who knew better; and while Morley continued to gaze at the bust of Richelieu, careless altogether of what any one thought of him—shut up, in short, like the lady of the Arabian giant, in a glass-case of his own sensations and thoughts, through which he could be seen, but could not be approached—he was suddenly roused by hearing his name pronounced, and, turning round, saw a countenance not less striking than that of Richelieu himself, nor, upon the whole, very different in character.

The first impression was not pleasant, for the loneliness of heart that he felt upon him, made

him repugnant to all companionship. Neither was the man he saw one in whom he was inclined to trust, or to confide—one whose sympathies were with him, or upon whose counsel he could rely; but yet, to say the truth, when he remembered the charm of his conversation, the power that he seemed to possess of leading the mind of others, with whom he held any communication, away from all that was unpleasant or painful, to brighter objects and to calmer thoughts, the first shrinking feeling of unwillingness passed away, and he stretched out his hand frankly, exclaiming—"Lieberg! I little dreamed of meeting you here."

Now the reader may remark, with great justice—"What, then, Morley Ernstein was by this time willing to seek entertainment!—If so, his sorrow was on the wane." He may likewise observe, that after all the acts and deeds committed by the worthy gentleman who now stood before him, it would surely have been more characteristic of Morley Ernstein to turn his back than to hold out his hand. True, O courteous reader!—true, in both cases—with the qualification of a "*but.*" Did you ever happen to take, under the influence of any of the many ills that flesh is heir to, a dose which

seemed somewhat bitter at first, but which produced great relief to the sick heart, or the aching head? If you have, you will know that though you might, nauseate the remedy at first, you sought it eagerly again as soon as you had experienced the benefit thereof. Now Morley Ernstein was exactly in that situation. Under the first pressure of grief, he had turned from the very thought of amusement with disgust; but in mere occupation he had found a mitigation of pain; and while gazing at the bust of that great and terrible man, and suffering his mind to run over the scenes of the past, he had felt an interval of tranquillity which he had not known for many a-day. Conscious therefore that in Lieberg's society he would find more of the same kind of relief than in that perhaps of any other man living, he was not unwilling to take the same medicine for his wound again, although there might be still a degree of repugnance lingering at his heart. In regard to the second point, let it be recollected, dear reader, that although our good friend, Count Lieberg, had done everything on earth which Morley Ernstein would have looked upon as base and villanous, had he been aware of the facts, not one particular of all those transactions with which the reader is fully acquainted had been

made known to him either by Helen or Juliet; and he was utterly ignorant of the whole. He looked upon Lieberg merely as a man of the world, with better feelings than principles; for although Morley was somewhat philosophically disposed by nature, he wanted totally that experience which, in the end, convinces us that the separation between good principles and good feelings is much more rare than youth and passion are willing to admit.

Principle may be one check upon a man, good feeling another; the man who has both is sure to go right, but the man who has either will not go far astray, and in this case too you may know the tree by its fruits. Of Lieberg's conduct to Helen Barham, of his conduct to her brother, Morley was ignorant; and though at first, as I have said, he felt but little disposed to like the society of any one, yet the second impulse made him hold out his hand, and utter the words that I have mentioned.

"I as little thought to see you in Calais," said Lieberg, in reply; "but I did trust to overtake you in Paris; for on my return to town, I heard that you had suddenly quitted England, that something had gone wrong with you, and that you were about to make an autumnal wandering in other lands."

Lieberg paused, seeing that the allusion which he had made to the cause of his companion's quitting England made Morley's brow knit heavily, and his eyes seek the ground. "To say the truth," continued Lieberg, "I am not in the best spirits myself, and I am somewhat aweary of this working-day world. I tried all the various resources of Great Britain for shaking off the dulness of this season of the year—fired a gun or two upon the moors, spent a day at a fashionable watering-place, and finding that everything was vanity and vexation of spirit, set off, post haste, to overtake you in Paris, and see if you would take a grumbling tour with me through foreign lands."

The picture which he gave of his state of mind was adapted with infinite art to the mood which his keen and penetrating eyes saw at once was dominant with his companion. A faint, and, as it were, unwilling smile, was Morley's only reply; but he passed his arm through that of Lieberg, and as they turned back, towards the inn, the latter proceeded—"We can go, you know, across from Paris to Cologne, then ramble along the banks of the Rhine, make our way through the Tyrol into Italy, spend the cold season at Rome or Naples, and then, if you like it, '*mitescente hyeme*,' return to England. Or,"

he continued, "if that suits you not, we can ramble still farther, plunge into Calabria, visit the blue shores of Greece, see the fairy-tale wonders of Constantinople, range through the scenes of the crusades in Syria and Palestine, and scour on fleet horses the sandy deserts of Egypt. Where need we stop, Morley? where need we stop? I have no tie to one quarter of the globe—you have none either, that I know of; the world is all before us, and the wonders, not only of a hundred countries, but a hundred ages. Where shall we not find some astounding record of the mighty past? Some of those marbles, which, in their slowly perishing grandeur, teach us the littleness of all things present, and, amongst the rest, of the cares and sorrows that we may both be suffering. Of those cares and sorrows we will speak no more; I ask you not what are yours—you question me not regarding mine. But let us onward, onward together, through all the varied scenes of earth, pausing no longer anywhere than while enjoyment is in its freshness, taking the grape while the bloom is upon it, and the flower before a leaf is shed. Once more, what say you?—shall it be so?"

There was something in the tone in which he

spoke, in the picture that he presented, in the very rapid succession of objects which he proposed, that seemed addressed with careful calculation to the weaker part of Morley's character—to the rash, the impetuous, the excitement-loving spirit, which had been long kept down by the influence of the better soul within him. There was nothing in the scheme against which that better soul could raise the warning voice; there was no one thing suggested which could be branded with the name of evil. It was like offering to an eager and a fiery horse a wide and swift career, while, faint at the far extreme, appeared a goal hung with prizes, which seemed to glitter, though dim and confused from the distance at which they were placed.

Morley hesitated not, but replied, his eyes for a moment lighting up with the fire which used once to be kindled so readily in them—"I will go willingly, Lieberg. It is, in fact, the scheme I had laid out for myself, only improved and brightened by having you for my companion. I have been ill since I have been here; but to-morrow they assure me I shall be ready to continue my journey."

CHAPTER VI.

"PROVIDENCE," says a powerful but dangerous author of another land—"has placed Disgust at the door of all bad places."

But, alas, she keeps herself behind the door as we go in, and it is only when we come out that we meet her face to face! The road to evil is undoubtedly a flowery path, smoothed down and softened with every care, so that no obstruction, no difficulty, may retard our steps, or keep us within the bounds of right. It is only when we would turn again that we discover the thorns.

Such may seem a strange homily wherewith to begin an account of the journey of Morley Ernstein and Frederick, Count Lieberg. It is nevertheless an undoubted fact, dear reader, that of all the many persons well calculated to

smooth, that high road to vice, of which we have just spoken, the young Baronet could have found none more dangerous than the man who, placed side by side with him, commenced, on the day following that with which we terminated our last chapter, a tour through lands where temptation is cheap, example abundant, and punishment rare—except, indeed, that silent punishment of the heart, the sentence of God's own law, to which man has sometimes added corporeal infliction, but from which he can never take away one fiery drop.

They sat side by side in Morley's carriage, turning over that of Count Lieberg to servants and baggage; for, as we have seen, Morley had no less than three men in his train—the courier, the groom, and good Adam Gray—while Lieberg was armed with a courier and a valet, so that they were plenty certainly to occupy both vehicles. The conversation between the two travelling companions was, of course, modified by the circumstances in which they were placed. It was no longer the wide, discursive, rambling play of fancy which had characterized their communications at an earlier period of their acquaintance, but it was full of deeper thoughts and feelings. It was no longer the even flow of a bright and sparkling rivulet, dancing rapidly on,

uninterrupted by any obstacle, glistening over the pebbles of its bed, and whirling in murmuring eddies from the banks; but it was the mountain-torrent, amongst rocks and precipices, now pausing in deep silent pools, now dashing through stones and crags, and now plunging, in an eager cataract, over the edge of the precipitous cliff.

It might be that Lieberg's mind had itself taken a different mood from the various scenes through which he had lately gone, from the violent passions which had actuated him, from the bitter disappointment of pride, and vanity, and love. Or was it that he purposely gave to all he said that tone which made it harmonize with the mood and temper of his companion at that moment? Who shall say which? Certain it is, however, that he, as usual, led the conversation, and led it in that exact strain which bore the mind of Morley Ernstein along with him. He suffered the pauses that took place to be long; he forced not his fellow-traveller to speak; he meditated, as well as Morley, and only roused himself from his silence to cast forth some fierce and flashing sarcasm at the world and all that it contains, or to utter some deep and stern comment upon

human happiness or human efforts. It was like the stillness of the storm's approach broken by the flash or the thunder. Then, if he found his companion so disposed, he would go on in a rambling and meditative manner, with a dark gloom pervading all he said, like the shadow of the cloud, remaining even when the voice of the tempest is still.

"Do you see that mother nursing her child, Morley?" he said, after a pause, as they drove through one of those small, miserable villages, to be found so frequently upon the road from Calais to Paris—"do you see yon mother nursing her child? Is it not a pretty sight?"

"I think it is," replied Morley, somewhat surprised at the sneering turn of the lip that accompanied his words.

"Ay," continued Lieberg, "it is indeed a sweet sight to see the sowing of hopes that go on from blight to blight, till all are blasted to the very root. For what is she nursing it, Morley? For sickness, and sorrow, and disappointment; for anguish of body and of mind; to find virtue become a curse, or pleasure alone in vice; for sin, crime, misery, and death, the grave and corruption, and hell hereafter! It is a sweet sight, indeed; and yet, if there be

truth, either in Holy Writ, or in worldly experience, such is what we have just seen. The child was a girl, was it not?"

"I think so," replied Morley, gloomily.

"Poor thing!" said Lieberg—"the more her misery. Men can find pleasure, or, at all events, relief from their cares, if they are wise enough to seek it. Women are altogether slaves—their minds to prejudices, their bodies to passions or to follies. They are worse than any other slaves, the slaves of two masters—of man, and of vanity."

Morley replied not, and the conversation dropped; but it is true, and therefore must be admitted, that the tone assumed by his companion was that which harmonized with the feelings in his own bosom, although he might see in many cases the falseness of his arguments, and the fallacy of all his deductions. Those feelings were of angry discontent, and he would not take the trouble to refute Lieberg, even where he perceived he was most wrong. It was like hearing a man who has deeply injured us accused of faults that he has not committed—too often do we listen, and internally dissent, but are silent, and perhaps are pleased.

After a pause of some minutes, Lieberg took

up the same topic again, pointing out how superior was the situation of man to woman; but still the theme was, that man could drown every sorrow and every care by varying excitements. It was too pleasant a doctrine for Morley, in his state of mind at the time, willingly to resist, and he yielded gradually to the belief that the only course for him to pursue was, to drown the memory of Juliet Carr by anything that could occupy or interest him. He proposed to himself innocent objects, it is true; but where is the man who can gallop his horse headlong at a fence, and say that he will not leap it?

The first day's journey passed in such conversation as we have described, and the carriages paused at Beauvais, for the night. It was yet light; and to while away an hour ere dinner was ready, Morley Ernstein, without giving any notice to Lieberg, who had gone to another room, strolled out to the fine old cathedral, and entered those doors which, in Roman-catholic countries, are never shut against the worshipper.

He gazed up towards the high transept, the magnificent proportions of which must ever bow the heart to religious feelings, first calling

to taste, and taste leading on imagination, and imagination bringing a thousand devout images in her train, as is always the case when appealed to by anything grand and solemn. There is something, also, in the architecture of Gothic churches, which has certainly a more devotional effect than the light and graceful buildings of the Greeks. There are near relationships between all grand sensations. Awe is the sister of Devotion; and I believe that feelings truly sublime can never be awakened in the human heart without ideas of religion rising up with them. Man often becomes sensible of his littleness in the midst of the works of his own hands; the eye runs up the tall column, till it loses the tracery of the capital in the airy gloom above; he stands at the foot of it as an insect, and thinks of the God for whose worship that structure was raised, and to whom it is less than the ant-hill on which we set our unconscious feet.

Morley Ernstein felt the influence of the place. The shady hour; the solemn arches; the sober hue of the building; the solitary lamp at a shrine on the other side; the kneeling figure of a woman, half hidden in the gloom; a receding step, that echoed along the vacant vault;—all

made him feel inclined to stay and meditate; and the better spirit seemed to think her hour was come again, and lifted her voice to take the bitterness from his wounded heart. It was in vain, however, for the fiend was near him, and ere Morley had reached the end of the choir, Lieberg was by him, and his hand upon his arm.

How was it that he whiled Morley away from those contemplations, which were likely to lead him to higher and holier feelings than those which his counsels could inspire? It was by no light laugh—it was by no bitter sneer—it was by none of those means which he might have employed at another time. He knew that there was a spirit dwelt in the air of that place which would not suffer any method of the kind to succeed. He called Morley's attention, then, to the beauties of the building, he descanted upon columns and arches with the most refined and delicate taste, he destroyed the grand effect of the whole by engaging his companion's fancy in the examination of details, and, drawing him out of the church, after having taken a turn round it, he pointed to some of the grotesque ornaments, the grinning heads, and monstrous forms which found place in the archi-

tecture of that day, and then, and not till then, he ventured upon a sneer.

"See, Morley," he said, "how these people think fit to decorate the temples of their God, with heads of devils and serpents! Thus is it with us all, I fear; and if we were to look to the temple which we raise to God in our own hearts, we should find it as full of grinning fooleries as the outside of a French cathedral. The very image that we draw of him, nine times out of ten, if we could embody it, would be no better than the great idol of Juggernaut; and, alas! like that idol, we often make it, in bloody triumph, roll over a crowd of human things, crushing all sweet affections, and joys, and happiness, beneath the wheels of one superstition or another. Is it more drivelling or more foolish to ornament a temple like that with toads, and bats, and dragons of stone, than to suppose that the God who made us and gave us powers of enjoyment, should quarrel with us for using those powers, or tasting pleasure wherever we find it?"

"It must depend upon the kind of pleasure, Lieberg," replied Morley, somewhat sharply. "God will never quarrel with us, I am sure, for that which neither injures ourselves, nor

other individuals, nor society in general—which neither degrades the spirit that he has given us, nor takes away from the glory of the giver. But it is a wide subject, Lieberg, which I will not discuss with you in my present mood; one thing, however, is very certain, that man's foolish imaginations can no more alter the nature of God, than those foolish ornaments can affect the prayers that are offered in sincerity beneath those walls. He has told us what he is, and with that we must rest satisfied."

Lieberg made no farther reply, for he was well aware, that one evil thought, that one dark doubt in regard to right and wrong, once implanted in the human mind, remains for its time buried in silence and apparent forgetfulness, till the summer day of temptation causes it to germinate and produce the richest harvest which a tempter can desire. He left the subject, therefore, where it was, and the following morning the two companions proceeded on their way towards the French metropolis.

They stayed not long in that capital, nor shall I pause upon all the events that occurred there. Lieberg took care that Morley should not want temptation, and it was not by any ordinary means that he stimulated him to yield

to it. He urged him not, he argued not with him in order to induce him to plunge into the ordinary dissipations of youth, but he proceeded by the sap and mine: every word, every tone, and every look being directed to show without an effort—to impress upon the mind of his companion as a self-evident truth, that a greater or a less degree of vice was an inevitable necessity, an incident in the life of every young man, without which, youth never reached manhood. He took it for granted—or, at least, he seemed to do so—that Morley's views on those subjects must be the same as his own—nay, that he must be already in some degree dipped in the stream, which is certainly neither that of immortality nor oblivion; and he more than once thought fit to suppose that his young companion went hither, or went thither with views which never entered into his head. At the same time, as his acquaintance was very extensive in Paris, he contrived that his fellow-traveller should be cast, whether he liked it or not, into such society as he thought fit.

Tools for any work are never wanting in Paris; a thousand accidents brought about a meeting between Morley and this fair lady, or that beautiful girl; and amidst the bright, the

gay, and the fascinating, there were many willing and well-skilled to lead youth upon the flowery path of passion. A moment of strong temptation came, working itself up by various accidents like clouds gathering together for a storm. Lieberg watched it coming, and chose the precise moment when the whole fabric of Morley's good feelings and good principles tottered, for the purpose of making a great effort to overthrow them altogether; but he strove for it, not as other men would have striven.

It was a sombre evening, the moment of danger he knew was to be towards nine o'clock that night, and Lieberg sought not to make his companion pass the hours in any occupation which might banish thought and reflection; on the contrary, it seemed as if a deep and heavy gloom had fallen upon himself; his conversation was of the darkest and desponding character; and, as they sat alone together, he skilfully called up every idea that might pile such a load upon Morley's heart and mind, as would impel him to anything in order to cast it off.

"Such evenings as this make me sad," he said, with his dark, bright eyes resting mournfully upon the young Englishman. "Autumn, indeed, is always to me a time of darkness. It

is the death-bed of the year, and still, when I think how many pleasures have slipped by us untasted—how few will ever return again,—when I think of the emptiness of many things that I have sought and cared about, I feel a cloud come over my spirit that I would give worlds to disperse! What a difference Morley," he continued, looking out of the window—"what a difference between this evening and that on which I some time ago met you in the park, with a beautiful girl hanging on your arm, and looking as if she loved you."

Morley shrunk as if he had been rending open his heart, and bent down his eyes upon the table, but Lieberg went on—"I, too, was happier then," he continued; "but those dreams fade, and I do believe, after all, that with women, the virtue and the high principle which we admire is but coldness of nature. They will be to all appearance as fond, as attached, as devoted, as may be, but put some small stumbling-block in their way, and we shall find that they will whirl all our happiness to the wind without a hesitation or a care."

Morley stretched out his hand to the Burgundy that stood by, with a sort of convulsive

grasp, filled the tumbler to the brim, and drank it off without a pause.

"Give me the woman of passion," continued Lieberg—"she who yields to the impetuous torrent of her love without fears of the consequences or thoughts of the future—a thousand to one she betrays me, it is true, but still she is mine while I possess her, and she can never inflict upon me the pang of the cold-hearted, virtuous coquette, who raises love almost to a pitch of agony, and then disappoints it with an agony more terrible, verifying the Icelandic fable of the damned, whose torture is, to be first burned in the heart of Hecla, and then plunged into its eternal snows. There have been periods in my life, Morley, when I have felt more bitterly than you know of; and it is ever in such dull times as this that the memory of all which is sad and dark in the past comes upon me. I wish the Salon was opened; I think I could go and stake my last louis, to see if, by the gambler's feverish joy, I could cast off this oppressive weight upon my breast. Give me the wine, Morley, and let us have the windows closed—I love not the world nor anything in it!"

Thus went he on for some time in a tone of dark despondency, which made the moral poison that mingled with all he said ten times more potent and dangerous than when it came diluted with gayer things. Had he presented to Morley's mind the memory of Juliet Carr in all her purity and goodness, he would have called up a warning angel rather than a fiend; but it was the memory of sorrows alone that he recalled, of that anguish of mind which—as corporeal pain will sometimes drive the wretch, in a moment of madness, to fly to deadly poison for the repose of death—will often urge on the spirit to a thousand harmful things, even for a moment's relief.

As he proceeded, the load seemed to lie more and more heavy upon Morley's heart. At first it bore him down, and seemed to overpower him, but gradually he rose to struggle against it; the wine seemed to strengthen him; he took another and another draught, but then he paused, saying, he would drink no more. Already, however, it had produced some effect, not in intoxicating, not in clouding his senses, but in sending that fire through the veins which none but the Burgundian grape can produce. He became impatient of Lieberg's

gloomy tone—he was glad when the clock struck nine.

"Ha! there is the hour," cried Lieberg. "Now will you come to the Salon, Morley? We shall find some excitement, at least, in those mischievous pieces of pasteboard."

"No," answered Morley, "I have an engagement to-night; my carriage must be by this time in the court;" and hurrying away to escape further question, the sound of wheels were heard the moment after.

A dark smile came upon Lieberg's countenance. He, too, went forth, but he was not absent more than an hour; and then, speaking a word to his valet as he passed, he walked into the sitting-room, and sat down to read. It was past one o'clock when the valet entered, suddenly saying—"That is his carriage now, sir."

Lieberg went out into the corridor, and passed Morley Ernstein, as, with a slow step, the young Englishman mounted the stairs. He gave him but a word of salutation, and hurried on; but Lieberg marked the haggard eye and the flushed cheek, and, entering his own bed-room, he stood silent for a moment in the midst of the floor, with a look of fierce triumph. It was as if he had won a great victory.

But there must have been a motive for all this. There was, and his words showed it: "He has fallen!" he cried—"he has fallen! The first plunge is taken! Who shall stop him now?—Neither Heaven nor hell. He shall go on—he shall go on! and ere many a year, I will show her this god of her idolatry as low and empty a licentious debauchee as any that crawls through opera saloons, or spends his days and nights between the gaming table and the brothel!"

CHAPTER VII.

At breakfast the following morning, the two travelling companions met again, and by that time a great change had come over the aspect of Morley Ernstein. A change in a very small particular, but one so remarkable that it instantly struck the eyes of Lieberg, surprised and puzzled him. Morley was grave —perhaps one might say, sad—but there was a calm, a tranquillity in his grief which had not appeared in his demeanour since his parting with Juliet Carr. There seemed none of that bitterness, that struggling against the hand of fate which had before characterized his sorrow: he was sad, as we have said, but he was no longer moody, indignant, and discontented.

Although, alas! we have no window through which to look into the breast of man, and see the springs and wheels of thought and action as they work, yet imagination may pry into the motives, and, perhaps, obtain some insight. It is but supposition, reader, yet we will try to show the causes of the change in Morley Ernstein. Previous to this period, the share of pride, which is in every human heart, had fixed itself upon his high and steadfast adherence to right; there had been in his bosom, in short, a sense of deserving; and a feeling of ill-treatment and angry repugnance to submit to the will of God had risen up when the first touch of sorrow lighted on him. He seemed to think that he had a right to happiness, and that to make him take his part in human griefs was an injustice.

Of course it must not be supposed that he acknowledged such sensations to his own mind, I paint them in the broad light as I believe they stood, without the veils with which the deceitfulness of man's heart covered them to Morley's own eyes. Had he analyzed his feelings, in truth he would have discovered that—though he might have experienced sorrow, deep poignant sorrow, at his disappointment under

any circumstances—the bitterer, the more fiery part of his grief would have been absent, had he not set up a claim to deserving a better fate. He had looked round, saying, as did the apostle, but with a different feeling—"What man convinces me of sin?"

Such had been his state up to the day before, and now the change which had come over him was produced by self-abasement. He no longer stood in the same proud position in his own eyes, he felt all his weakness, all the weakness of human nature, and his spirit was bowed down in humility before the will of God. He could no longer say—"I have deserved;" and although his sadness was increased by knowing that he had himself erred, yet it was a more wholesome grief than that which he had before experienced, and bitter repentance opened his heart, so that resignation could take the place of despair.

I have said that his demeanour puzzled Lieberg; he could not comprehend the change that he saw in Morley Ernstein; but the truth is, his own character was so different, that similar events would with him have produced the reverse result. His spirit was one neither to sorrow nor repent, and the consciousness of evil would but have made him raise his head to

meet the avenger; he might bow, indeed, under the force of circumstances, but it was only for the purpose of an after struggle. He watched his companion attentively, then, but he commented upon nothing that he saw; he took no note of their conversation on the preceding evening, or of any events which might have followed, but he began in a lighter, though not a gay tone, asking Morley how he had slept, and adding—"What a stormy night it has been."

"Indeed!" replied Morley; "I did not hear it."

"Innocence sleeps sound," said Lieberg, with a laugh—

> "'Virtue, without the doctor's aid,
> In the soft arms of sleep was laid;
> Whilst vice, within the guilty breast,
> Could not be physicked into rest.'

"Is it so, Morley? But after all, what conventional nonsense those poets write! Well may it be said that they deal in fiction, and their morality is not a bit more real than the rest. A pretty sort of morality, truly, one finds in all these moral poets, and other righteous personages; they think no more of manufactur-

ing a falsehood to serve the cause of truth, as they call it, than a poor, honest, wicked man like myself thinks of drinking my cup of coffee. Now what a gross lie it is—so gross, indeed, as to be quite impotent—to tell us that virtue is happiness, and that innocence always sleeps comfortably. For my part, everything that I see around me makes me believe, that, in this world at least, virtue is more akin to misery than to happiness; and how many pangs and sorrows are there that from time to time disturb the repose of innocence, and break the rest of the purest and the best."

"That is true," replied Morley, thoughtfully. "Griefs may often break the sleep of innocence, but can vice ever repose, Lieberg? And as to the happiness or unhappiness of the good and the bad, thank God there is another world where things may be made even!"

"Your English proverb says," rejoined Lieberg, "that 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.' I would rather take out my stock of happiness here, my good friend."

"I have been thinking much over that subject this very morning," answered Morley, "and have made up my mind upon the matter, Lieberg."

"And to what conclusion?" asked his companion.

"That the balance even here is in favour of right," replied Morley. "Supposing that there be an equal portion of misfortunes and disappointments, successes and advantages, allotted to the virtuous and the vicious—and there is nothing either in reason or experience to show that the bad man is more favoured by fortune than the good—the very nature of the virtuous man's own mind leaves his pleasures not only more pure, but more poignant from the freshness of his heart, while his sorrows are diminished by resignation to the will of Him who sent them, and by those bright hopes which lighten half the load of life."

"I am glad to think that you have got up such a comfortable philosophy," answered Lieberg, "for of late I have certainly seen that you are very sad, Morley, and I have striven to the best of my power, though somewhat vainly, to cheer you."

"I thank you for it deeply," replied Morley, extending his hand, "and I wish I had been wise enough to get up this philosophy, as you call it, before. You would not have found it, then, so difficult to soothe me, Lieberg."

"It is an excellent good philosophy," answered his companion; "and the only part of it with which I might be inclined to quarrel, my good friend, is the actual estimation of what is right and what is wrong, what is innocent and what is vicious. I do not take for granted the dictum of every would-be philosopher—no, nor of every puritan—when he tells me that a thing which makes me very happy, and does no harm to anybody, is a vice or a wickedness;—but there is no use of talking any more about it. Ethics are a very uncertain science; what's excessively wicked in one country is highly virtuous in another—polygamy is an honoured observance in Turkey. Dwindle it down to bigamy in England, and it becomes a great crime, for which you send the poor wretch to hard labour in a penal colony, as if the fool's act would not be punishment enough if we did but compel him to abide by the consequences, and live with the two wives at once."

Lieberg laughed aloud, half drowning Morley's reply — "The Christian has always a standard of morality, Lieberg."

The former, however, wished to pursue the subject no more, for he was satisfied with the advantages he had gained, and was well in-

clined to leave the boundaries of vice and virtue vague and undefined. He therefore turned the matter off with a jest, and as their breakfast concluded, demanded—"Well, Morley, what shall we do to-day?"

"For my part," answered Morley, "I shall quit Paris this very day; but I do not wish to influence your conduct, Lieberg, as you may have affairs to keep you here somewhat longer. I wish to be away from the place, and will wait for you anywhere that you like, till you rejoin me."

Lieberg's eyes flashed with an angry expression for a moment, when Morley talked of leaving the French capital so suddenly; but the latter part of his companion's speech cleared his brow again, and he replied—"Nay, nay, I will go with you. I have nothing to do here, unless it were to take leave of some of the fair girls we know; but as you are in such haste, we will do without even that. Doubtless, as the poet says—

> 'Fresh freres will clear the bright blue eyes
> We late left swimming o'er.'"

All the arrangements were soon made, passports were signed, bills were paid, accounts

were closed, horses were procured, and, ere night, Morley Ernstein and his companion were some miles on their way towards the banks of the Rhine.

It was rather late in the year for the German watering places, and about one half of the company which, during the summer, had thronged the picturesque villages of Nassau and Baden had taken its flight towards greater cities. A number still remained, however, to linger out the last fortnight of the season, and roulette and rouge-et-noir, and certain select gambling parties, went on with only the greater vigour from the want of that excitement which the more extended society of the full season brought with it. It is just at that time of year that the arrival of strangers—especially if they come with some little display of importance—creates the greatest sensation, and it may be easily believed that the two handsome English carriages, the servants and the couriers which accompanied Morley and his companion, made many a head protrude itself from the windows, and many an idler gather round the vehicles. The appearance of those within them did not diminish the interest felt, and some questions were asked of the servants as to the names of the two gentlemen,

which soon circulated amongst the inhabitants of the place. The dinner at the table d'hôte passed off pleasantly; Lieberg meeting with several persons whom he knew, and Morley being placed next to a most respectable looking old German Baroness, with her white hair beautifully arranged round her fair though wrinkled face. Notwithstanding the melancholy which still hung heavily upon Morley Ernstein, the frank and lady-like manner of his fair neighbour at the board, soon seduced him into conversation, which the society of the young and the beautiful, perhaps, might have not been able to effect.

In the evening, he strolled with Lieberg into the great hall where the company had assembled, intending but to gaze for a moment at the splendour which such a place generally displays, and then to wander out into the walks round about which had been cut with careful taste to give every attraction to the little town. Very different indeed was the scene presented from that which he had often witnessed before in a Parisian gaming-house. Roulette and rouge-et-noir, were, it is true, going on in one part of the vast hall, and card-tables were to be seen laid out in another; but besides the parties occu-

pied with such dangerous pursuits, there were various gay and glittering groups moving here and there, or seated at various tables taking different kinds of refreshment. A band was playing in the open space before the manifold windows of the building, the night was clear and warm, for the time of year, and everything that heart could do had been done to render the scene splendid, and to banish thought by forcibly engaging the mind with a whole host of amusements.

Again Lieberg, as they moved onward, met with many acquaintances—some of them foreigners, some of them Englishmen. Indeed, in every place, and amongst every nation, he seemed to have friends, and he took care to introduce his young companion to all the most distinguished personages present; princes, and counts, and barons without number, and more than one noble lord whom Morley had often heard of as men of high repute, but had never met with before.

Not anxious for much society, Morley Ernstein, at length, disengaged himself from Lieberg, telling him that he was about to stroll out through the walks; but the moment after he was stopped by a fine-looking elderly man,

of a fresh and pleasing, though somewhat melancholy countenance, who held out his hand to him as an old acquaintance. After a moment's thought, Morley recollected the old nobleman whom he had met with in London, and to whom he had been introduced at the house of Mr. Hamilton. Well pleased at what he remembered of their conversation on those occasions, he returned his greeting warmly, and willingly sat down beside him for a few moments in one of the windows.

"I hope you are not in search of health, Sir Morley," said Lord Clavering. "You do not look so well as when I met you in London."

"Oh, no!" answered Morley; "my health is good; but I am seeking what most people seek, after they have found the uselessness of seeking happiness—I mean amusement. But I trust your lordship is not less fortunate in point of health, though I am afraid, from your asking me, that you yourself have been driven to these baths by some of the unpleasant ills of the flesh."

"Not exactly so," replied the old nobleman, "though I always think that mineral waters are medicines with which nature herself furnishes us for almost all diseases, if we do

but apply them rightly. It is now many years ago since I myself received great benefit from these waters. I had just suffered a deep and terrible affliction which, through the mind, had preyed upon my constitution, and no one expected that I should ever recover. I was then a younger son, seeing life, as it is called, in the Austrian service. I accordingly threw up my commission, and was returning home to die in England, little cared for by anybody, and, to say the truth, caring little for anybody myself—except, indeed, one who has also been snatched from me since, by the inexplicable decrees of God. I paused, however, at this very place; and though at that time I thought life a very valueless possession, and was prepared, like Cawdor, 'To throw away the dearest thing I owed, as 'twere a careless trifle,' I remained here for six weeks, and by so doing recovered health and life."

"And have you never had to curse the waters since?" asked Morley, gloomily, "and to wish that you had not tasted them?"

"No, my young friend," replied the old lord; "though I thought at that time, as you seem to think now; yet I have since had to bless them for affording me time to judge better of many

things, and to learn submission to the will of the Almighty—nay more, for having left me to the enjoyment of many blessings, the calm sunshine of health and ease, and that degree of freshness of heart—notwithstanding some bitter sorrows and deep disappointments — which enables me still to feel many endearing affections, partaking, perhaps, less of the eager passions which are the portion of youth, but more of the permanent convictions of experience. I can now love worth," he continued, with a smile, "better than beauty, and seek in the companion of my later hours the friend rather than the mistress."

"I have been wrong, my lord," said Morley, "and gave way to a bitterness of spirit which I do not wish in general to indulge——"

At that moment Lieberg came up hastily, and spoke to his young companion in a low voice, saying—"Will you do me a favour, Morley? I know you hate play of all kinds, but I know also you do not care about losing a crown or two. The old Baroness Von L——, next whom you sat at dinner, is very anxious for a quotidian game of whist. She has pressed me into the service, and there is the old Prince of Naggerstein, but we cannot get a fourth, all

we can do. Come, only sit down for one rubber. I hate that dull drivelling game as much as anybody, but I could not well refuse."

Morley rose and walked slowly to the table, feeling that it was utterly impossible he could take the slightest interest in any one of all the gambler's pursuits. In his eyes, rouge-et-noir was as stupid as whist, and whist as stupid as draughts. Of all the games that were ever invented, if he had been forced to choose one, it would probably have been marbles. He sat down to play, however: the old lady was charmed with his politeness; the Prince of Naggerstein was courtesy itself. Morley soon found that the stakes were enormously high, and that the two old opponents of Lieberg and himself were a couple of thorough-paced gamblers. Lieberg seemed to discover the fact at the same moment, and gave a warning look across the table towards Morley. He himself played well and carefully, but during the first rubber the young Englishman could not bend his attention sufficiently on the game, made several mistakes, and the two companions were losers of a very considerable sum.

"For Heaven's sake, Morley, be careful!" said Lieberg. "You have lost me five hundred

louis by not playing up to my lead. We must have our revenge, however, for it is impossible to rise with such a loss as that. I understand the old lady's game now; only be careful, and we shall recover."

He spoke in English, which language the other two did not understand, and Morley, vexed with himself, continued at the table. He did now pay attention—nay, more, he became interested, eager. The dark bright eyes of Lieberg were fixed upon him sharply from the other side of the table, and Morley fancied that he read in them anxiety to see what he was about to play. It was, on the contrary, only to mark how far the gambling spirit of the place was getting a hold upon his mind. The scheme had been well arranged, and it was so far successful, that Morley felt that dangerous degree of excitement which he had never experienced before, the first symptoms of the growing disease —of that fell and terrible disease, which, when once it has taken full possession of any human being, never leaves him till it has destroyed him—the immedicable fever of the mind.

Once he raised his eyes from the table, and saw Lord Clavering standing opposite to him with a look of melancholy interest in his face.

Morley averted his glance, and went on eagerly with the game, the impetuosity of his nature affecting him in this, as in all other pursuits, and carrying him on with a vehemence which he wished to restrain without being able. As his mind was clear and rapid, and his memory good, he played well now that he payed attention; Lieberg also managed his game with admirable skill, leading Morley on almost to the very last with the expectation of winning.

The end of the rubber was again approaching; Morley Ernstein had played, the Prince of Naggerstein had just made a trick; the result of the whole depended upon Lieberg's next card, and while he paused, as if in thought, Morley again lifted his eyes. Lord Clavering was still there, but another figure now stood beside him which made the young Englishman turn, for a moment, as pale as death. The next instant the blood rushed from his heart into his face and temples, he saw and understood nothing more of what had passed at the card table, except that Lieberg had played, and that the game was lost.

Rapidly paying what the other party had won, Morley turned away, saying, in a determined tone, that he would play no more. Lieberg

marked the look, and said, in a low voice to himself, "The time will come!" But the next instant, following Morley with his eyes, he saw him standing beside one of the most lovely creatures he had ever beheld, with a degree of agitation in the manner of both, which not even all the crowd that was around them could repress. The lady was dressed in deep mourning, but Lieberg had no difficulty in recognising the same fair being whom he had once seen with Morley in the park, and with Lady Malcolm upon another occasion.

What were the sensations of Morley, as he stood beside Juliet Carr, and, with a low voice and beating heart, enquired into what had passed since he left her! Juliet was not less agitated than himself. It was evident that she was glad, not sorry to see him, though melancholy mingled with her joy, and she left the soft, fair, trembling hand in his as long as he thought fit to detain it. She told him that the cause of the mourning which he beheld was the death of her father, and those tidings, it must be owned, produced but one sensation in Morley's heart. He had respect for Juliet's grief, however, and for a moment or

two bent down his eyes for fear glad hopes should sparkle up in them, and jar with her natural sorrow. In the brief pause that took place, Lord Clavering, who had stood by with Juliet's arm resting in his, watching with no slight interest, apparently, the agitation of his fair companion and her lover, disengaged himself from her, saying—"I will see if the carriage is there, Juliet. Sir Morley, will you take care of this lady till I return; I will not be long."

"Oh, Morley," said Juliet, the moment he was gone, "I have one great favour to ask of you—a favour that will make me as happy as anything can!"

"Name it Juliet," replied Morley; "are you not sure that, to make you happy I would sacrifice life itself?"

"Never sit down again to a table like that, Morley," said Juliet. "You know not the agony of watching one that we love with a countenance full of passions which only the dark spirits of this place can impart. Promise me, Morley—promise me, if you have ever loved me. You cannot tell what I have suffered within the last five minutes."

"I do promise you, Juliet," replied Morley; "but you know not what I have suffered

during many weeks. I told you, Juliet, that I could not answer for what occupations I might seek, in order to cast off the misery which your loss inflicted on me."

"That which is wrong," replied Juliet, "depend upon it can but add gall to the well of bitterness. Oh, Morley, for my sake—for Juliet's sake—strive for better consolations. To know that you are happy, were the only happiness that I could now possess; and I am sure that such a heart as yours can never find anything but wretchedness in vice."

"I will trust," said Morley, "that the state of despair which might well drive me to any source of relief is to last no longer. Where are you to be found, Juliet? I will come early tomorrow; and you must then give me up at least an hour—to myself and by myself, Juliet."

She shook her head mournfully, but replied at once—"We are at the place called the Towers. Come if you like, but it is all in vain. I would fain be with you often, Morley—I would fain be with you always, to advise—to counsel, to soothe you; but it must be as a sister. I can never be more."

"This must be explained," answered Morley; but at that moment Lord Clavering again ap-

peared, saying—"The carriage is here;" and at the same time offering his hand to Juliet to lead her from the hall.

Morley, however, would not give up his post till the last minute, and he himself conducted Juliet to the side of the carriage. He waited with a heavy heart and frowning brow, till the old nobleman, taking his seat by Juliet in the vehicle, ordered the coachman to drive to "The Towers." Then, after pausing moodily for a moment or two before the door of the building, he looked up into the sky, and, with a deep and long-drawn sigh, turned into the paths that wound away, through the woods, up towards the summit of the hills.

CHAPTER VIII.

NIGHT and meditation were friendly to Morley's spirit; he wandered on, rising higher and higher as he advanced, over the busy world of emptiness, of folly and vice that he had just left in the great hall. The fresh breeze of the mountain played around his head, and quieted the feverish throbbing of his temples. He looked up to the Heavens, and saw star beyond star, till the deep blue sky seemed, to his intense gaze, to grow white with the multitude of brilliant orbs that shone forth from the very bottom of the depth. Was it possible that he could see that infinite immense of worlds without thinking of God, without wondering at the mightiness of his power, without asking himself if his goodness or his strength could

ever fail, and without deriving thence powers of endurance—ay, and powers of resistance, too—which no other philosophy could have afforded?

The very sight of Juliet Carr, too—the very words that she had uttered, though their import was sad, and though not a ray of hope could be elicited from anything that she had said, woke the better spirit in the bosom of her lover, and led his thoughts on to higher and to holier things than those to which the earthly spirit would have prompted him.

He wandered on, thinking of endurance: for the first time since the bitter disappointment that he had met with, the heavenly spirit in his bosom seemed to have free sway, to clear away, as in days of yore, the mists and shadows of earth from his eyes, to unveil the skeleton face of earth's ordinary pleasures, and to show him the rankling corruption of even the fairest forms of vice.

"I will endure," he thought, "firmly, strongly, resolutely. I will endure with resignation, with submission, with the courage of a man, with the humility of a Christian. Juliet shall not grieve to see me plunge into those things which my own heart condemns. I will learn, once for all, whether there be any real

and substantial obstacle between us; and if my life must be passed in sorrow and regret, I will not add remorse also to the burden."

He had now climbed high up the side of the hill, with nothing but the stars above him, and turning his eyes from them down upon the town below, he beheld the place where he had so lately sat, with the lights glittering from the manifold windows, and the music sighing faintly up to his distant ear. The sight and the sounds only filled him with disgust; and it was with regret that, after remaining for some time longer upon the hill, he took his way back again to the busy haunts of men.

On arriving at the inn, and entering the rooms which had been assigned to himself and Lieberg, he found considerable confusion and disarray. The cause was soon explained to him, for the moment after he appeared, his companion issued forth from the left-hand room, saying, with an eager look—"What say you, Morley, to a journey by night? I have just received intelligence which obliges me to set off for Munich immediately—every hour is of consequence. Will you come?"

Morley thought of Juliet Carr, and replied, that he was sorry that he could not go—that it was impossible. Lieberg pressed him much,

and seemed mortified that he would not consent; but his friend explained to him that he had made an engagement for the following morning which he could not break; and it was at length arranged that they should meet at Augsburg or Munich, Morley adding, with a faint light from hope still shining in his bosom —"If nothing should occur on either part to prevent it."

In less than half an hour the wheels of Lieberg's carriage rolled away, and Morley, finding that it was hopeless to attempt to sleep, sat up and read for some hours. How few books are there, amongst all the many that come from the hand of man, on which the mind can rest when the heart is sad! How often is even the very best of human productions taken up and laid down, looked at and cast away, as the sad thoughts wander round the one painful subject to which they are fixed, like an animal tethered in a field to one particular point, which he may turn round and round in every direction, but from which he can never break away. Many a book will amuse the couch of pain, will draw away the mind from corporeal uneasiness, but the anguish of the heart has a property in our thoughts that cannot be dissolved; and if any work can call

us from that anguish, even for a moment, its chief characteristic must be goodness. Wit, and fancy, and imagination jar sadly with the tones of sorrow, but high and pure philosophies come as a balm to the wounds of the spirit.

It was over some of the smaller poems of Milton that Morley paused; and though he could not go on very connectedly, yet there was a depth and a freshness in the whole as invigorating as the waters of a clear, cool river to the limbs of one who has wandered far through a hot day. His spirit seemed to plunge into that well of pure poetry, and rose up refreshed.

At length he retired to rest, and though he slept not for some hours, yet his thoughts were calm. He determined that he would go early on the following morning to see Juliet Carr —that he would not wait for any formal time of visiting, although he saw that she was travelling with a party consisting of persons whom he believed to be nearly strangers to him; and he lay and revolved all that he would say and all that he would do, with the usual vain calculation of man, who never till the end of life learns to know that the very next minute is not his own. Thus passed the

first four hours of the night, and then came a short period of repose, broken with thought running into dreams, and then came deep and profound slumber.

It seldom, if ever, happens that we can obtain sleep when we most require it, but the unbidden guest visits us at the times when we wish him most away. Morley Ernstein slept longer than he intended, but, nevertheless, it was not late when he woke; his watch pointed to a quarter to eight, and, starting up, he rang eagerly for his servant, intending to proceed upon his errand at about half-past nine. There was a note in the hands of old Adam Gray as he entered, and, as may be easily imagined, it was with some emotion that Morley opened it when he saw the hand writing of Juliet Carr; but that emotion was greatly increased when he read the contents.

"We go early," she said; "and though I will never refuse to see you when you think fit to come, I am inclined to believe that it would be better you should not come to-day at all. I could say nothing, Morley, to console you. All that I could tell you would, perhaps, but make you the more unhappy. For me the dream of life is over, and I feel from what passed last night, that it agitates us both too much at present to meet frequently. I will not say 'too much for

me,' because I resign myself entirely to my fate —it is fixed and determined—I hope nothing, I fear nothing, I expect nothing. There is only one thing that I pray for in this life, to know that you are happy, and never, by any chance, to have cause to think otherwise of you than I have always hitherto done. Such is my fate, Morley, and such must be the fate of every woman situated as I am; but with a man it is very different. Suffer the memory of these days to fade away—I do not say forget me, for that I think you will never do; but remember me only as one that is dead. Form other ties, open your heart to other attachments, and believe me, that I shall experience the only consolation that I can receive in knowing that your affection for me, and the bitter disappointment that we have both undergone, has not permanently affected the happiness, or in any degree changed the nature of the man I love."

"When did this come?" exclaimed Morley, in a tone that made the old man start.

"About an hour ago, sir," replied Adam Gray. "I knocked at your door, but you were sound asleep."

Morley cast down the paper, dressed himself as rapidly as possible, and hurried out.

There were two or three people lounging quietly at the door of the inn called "The Towers," without any one of those signs and appearances which indicate to the eye of the experienced traveller that a departure is about to take place. There were no boxes in the passage, nor leather cases, nor cloaks and shawls, nor portfolios and drawing-books, the stray volume of a new romance, nor the couriers' innumerable straps and buckles. There were two or three men with whiskers, and one with mustachioes, and each bearing about him that indescribable something which points out the travelling servant; but they were all in a state of calm tranquillity; and Morley, by the whole aspect of the place, became convinced he was not, as he had feared, too late. He went into the house, then, and enquired of a person whom he met, and whom, from certain signs and symptoms, albeit as unlike an English innkeeper as possible, he took to be the master of the hotel, where he should find Miss Carr?

The man stared, and then replied, that there was no such person there. Morley next asked for Lord Clavering, which name immediately brought up a look of intelligence in the innkeeper's countenance; but the answer that

instantly followed, at once damped the young Englishman's hopes.

"Oh, they are gone—they are gone!" replied the man. "They have been gone three quarters of an hour."

"Who do you mean by they?" demanded Morley.

"Why, the old my lord, and the lady, and the beautiful young lady, and all—maids and servants and couriers, and all," answered the host.

"Are you sure they are the persons I mean?" said Morley, with the last faint hope struggling up.

"I will shew you their names in the book," rejoined the innkeeper; and, taking him into a small room at the side of the passage, he opened a huge book before him, and pointed to a long string of names, half way down the page.

Morley read, but he soon saw enough, for there stood the words—"Lord Clavering, Lady Malcolm, Juliet Carr." He turned away in silence, with his heart full of bitter thoughts, and, taking his way back to the inn, he gave but one order—"Let everything be prepared for departure."

"Do you know, sir," said Adam Gray, after

hesitating for a moment or two—"do you know, sir, that Miss Juliet is here? I saw her maid this morning, in the street, and I did fancy that note came from her——"

Morley waved his hand impatiently, and the old man stopped. "She is gone," replied Morley Ernstein; "do as I told you, Adam."

"Will you not take breakfast, sir?" demanded the old servant, with a wistful look in his master's face.

"No, no!" answered Morley, impatiently; and Adam Gray quitted the room. He paused musing at the door, however, laying his finger upon his bald forehead, and muttering to himself—

"If I was sure it was she who is making him miserable—I would—that I would! But she never seemed to have any pride in her. What right had she, indeed? But I can't think it's her doing; she was always a good, kind young lady, as ever lived, and I am sure I thought she was fond enough of Master Morley, as well she might be. She wont find such another match in a hurry. But I'll watch, and see; she may be playing the fool after all, for there's no knowing about women—they are so devilish uncertain."

With this moral reflection old Adam Gray concluded his soliloquy, and went to give the orders with which his master had entrusted him, in regard to preparing for departure. Ere noon all was ready, and Morley, alone in his carriage, with his arms folded on his chest, his brow bent, and his hat pressed over his forehead, drove out of the little town, while many a foreign idler of the baths stood gazing at him, sneering at the gloomy aspect that they did not comprehend, and pointing him out as the true personification of English spleen.

Buried in the depth of his own thoughts, Morley cared little what comments were made upon his appearance. The brief glimpse he had had of Juliet Carr, the momentary revival of hope, had but plunged him into deeper gloom now that it was gone, and for a time all the better feelings which reflection had produced passed away, and left him as bitter in spirit as ever. There was one strong, predominant determination, however, in his mind, which was, to seek another meeting with Juliet wherever she had gone; to induce her to give him reasons for her conduct; to make her speak plainly why she debarred him and herself of hope, why, if she loved him, as she did not deny that she did,

she made him miserable now that her father's death had removed his opposition to their union.

Such were the feelings with which he went on through the wild valleys and deep ravines that led him back to the banks of the Rhine. This is not the journal of a tourist, reader! but still I must pause, to say a word or two upon the scenes through which Morley Ernstein now passed, because those scenes were not without effect upon his mind. At first the impression was imperceptible, but gradually it became more and more strong, operating like some fine restorative balm, and producing a slow but salutary effect, as he journeyed on. It is not through the ear alone, nor by the written words addressed to the eye, neither by the tale, nor the fable, nor the moral, that man's heart may receive instruction, if he will but take it. There is not—I say again—there is not a sight, there is not a sound, from the flower in the valley to the cloud-covered peak of the mountain—from the song of the lark to the thunder of the storm, which does not speak to the heart of man sweet counsel, and wisdom without end; sinking softly, calmly, almost imperceptibly, into the mind.

The mere aspect of nature's ever-varying face must, if we will let it, tranquillize the passions, harmonize all the jarring affections of our nature, and with a solemn, and a soothing voice, proclaim to us the love, and the wisdom of Him—

"Who shapes our fate, rough-hew it how we will."

Such also was the effect upon Morley Ernstein, as he journeyed onward, though it was produced very slowly. When he first raised his eyes, the mouth of the valley through which his course had been directed was just opening out upon the Rhine. High on either side rose grey ruins, pinnacled upon the ancient mountain-tops, all that remained of the feudal domination of the past; dark, and solemn, and sad, each itself a legend, appealing more strongly to the imagination than any of those with which tradition had ornamented the walls. Fancy might there range at liberty, might people the deserted halls with life, might see fair faces gazing from the casementless windows, might cover the winding roads with the bands of horsemen, and might see the plundered merchants, or the train of captives, borne up to the hold of the lordly robbers who reigned in the towers above. The ruined

church called fancy to other creations—the bridal song, and gay procession, the joyful birth of the young heir, the dark funeral of the departed lord, and all the manifold acts to which the ceremonies of religion lend their aid.

It is true, the imagination of Morley Ernstein, occupied with one sad subject, was not disposed to tear his mind away from the present; but, still, as the eye rested upon this object or upon that, his thoughts would stray for a moment to the scenes of the dim past; or, leaving his own fate for an instant, would find a temporary occupation in that of others. The merry vintage was going on; and on every bank, and on every hill, thousands and thousands of the peasantry, rejoicing in the reward of honest industry, poured forth their songs as he passed by. While he gazed around, perhaps, he pictured to himself the return home of the labourers he saw, the embrace of affection, the soft domestic love, and all the household joys that were never to be his; but still he was not so selfish that he could not bless God for the happiness of others, though he himself could not partake of it. The better spirit, reader, gained the ascendancy, and in deep and pensive thought, calm though sad, he went upon his way.

All those who have travelled along the banks of the Rhine—and few there are who have not done so, now-a-days—know well, that though, perhaps, the Rhone presents more picturesque beauties, there is scarcely any spot on earth where, to loveliness of scenery, are joined so many thrilling memories, and such a wide extent of associations. Well might it be called the Storied Rhine; for there is not one step along its banks which has not its history; and from the ages of the Roman domination, down to the "Now," when the stranger stands beside it, there is scarcely a year in the wide course of time, which has not marked the Rhine by some great event. He, indeed, must have become dead to life, or never have been alive to half the wonderful things that life presents, who can wander by the side of that mighty river, without giving himself up to dreams of the past—ay, and perchance of the future.

Morley Ernstein was neither; and though the tone of his own feelings, of course, gave a colouring to all his thoughts, yet his meditations on the things around him soon became deep and long, and in those meditations he himself found relief.

Thus passed the next four days, but, as he

went from inn to inn, he perseveringly strove to trace the road that Juliet Carr had taken. Once only, however, he met with the name of Lord Clavering, with the words, " and party," attached to it; and he knew not why, but a painful feeling that Juliet Carr should be included in the party of another passed across his mind. He strove to banish it instantly; he asked himself, with a sort of scornful smile, if he were jealous of Lord Clavering; but still the idea continued painful; and now, convinced that Juliet had taken the same road which he was following, he simply pointed out the name of the party to his courier, and directed him to search for it in the inn-books, and let him know when he found it again.

CHAPTER IX.

When the fall of Napoleon Buonaparte had opened the gates of Europe to the little body of islanders who had been knocking at them for so many years in vain, the first that rushed in to see all the wonders of the great continental fair, were, of course, the great and the wealthy, having every means at hand to satisfy to the full the expectant innkeepers and postilions, who were well prepared to make the purses of our good countrymen pay for the sights which had been so long forbidden. But in the rear of these, only by a very short distance, came a number of very respectable people of an inferior class, who were firmly resolved to have their holiday also, and that it should be spent on the Continent. The means of locomotion,

indeed, were not so plentiful then as now; no steam-boats bridged over the Straits of Dover; no railroads saved one the trouble of seeing anything in Europe without depriving one of the pleasant consciousness of making a tour. People set out actually to travel in those times; and many a worthy citizen of London contemplated the journey to Paris with as much wild excitement, and strong sense of personal enterprise and merit in braving danger, as did Le Vaillant, or Bruce, or Cook, or any other traveller of past days.

To facilitate them in their undertaking, however, there was established, at a house on the eastern side of the Haymarket, what may be called a dépôt of *voituriers*, where a man was almost always to be found or heard of, ready, for a specified sum, to carry any lady, gentleman, or child, who might be locomotively disposed, from one part of Europe to another. In truth, the manner of travelling was not at all an unpleasant one, and being then in its first freshness, fewer tricks were played upon the traveller, more conveniences provided for him, and the rogues and vagabonds with which Europe is superabundantly supplied, had not then fully discovered that the trade of *voiturier*

was one which afforded them great facilities for the exercise of their talent.

It was one day, then, in the month of September, a short time after various events had taken place, which have been related in this true history, that a Swiss *voiturier*, ready, for any man's money, to go to any part of the civilized world, was standing in the shop in question, having left his horses and carriage in the good town of Calais and come over to England, for the express purpose of seeing what the English could be about, that nobody had hired him up to that late period of the year. The master of the house expressed himself not a little grieved that such was the case, but assured him that he had not had one single application, and was in the very act of counselling him to go back to Switzerland empty, when a tall, powerful, and good-looking man, dressed in black, and with a very pretty and lady-like young woman leaning upon his arm, entered the shop, and made some enquiries, which instantly caused the Swiss to raise his ears, and listen with great attention.

His knowledge of the English language was certainly very limited, but at the same time he understood the meaning of the word carriage, and

was well aware that the word Naples, though somewhat diffferent from the Italian name of the place, was applied by us Englishmen to the City of the Syren. He soon found, then, that the gentleman was bargaining to be carried, lodged, and boarded by the way, from the town of Calais to that of Naples. He, moreover, understood that two ladies and a child were to be of the party, so that four places, out of the six which his vehicle afforded, might be speedily secured. He perceived, likewise, that the gentleman made his bargain shrewdly and strictly—in fact, as a man accustomed to deal with a world which has rogues in it; and as he thought he saw an inclination on the part of the master of the shop to risk losing a customer by demanding too much, he hastened to join in to the best of his abilities, and make his bargain for himself. His next discovery was, that the gentleman in black could not speak a word of any language but his own; and that the lady who was with him could only converse in French of a certain sort; but after about three-quarters of an hour's discussion, the whole matter was arranged satisfactorily, and the Swiss set off again for Calais, to prepare for a journey to Naples, to which city he was to convey the

party of travellers, upon terms set down in a written agreement.

When all had been settled, the two future travellers took their way through the streets of London to one of the small houses, which, placed in the neighbourhood of the more fashionable parts of the town, afford to the younger and poorer branches of distinguished families many a convenient residence at no great expense.

"No. 15, did you not say, Jane?" said the gentleman, addressing the lady on his arm. "It seems a wonderfully nice house; I wonder how that is kept up."

Knocking as he spoke, he asked the servant who appeared—a man in mourning livery—if Miss Barham were at home. But even while he was putting the question, the door of what seemed a dining-room opened, and a distinguished looking elderly man, apparently not in the best health, came out, saying, to some persons within—"Well, gentlemen, all I can say is, that he shall hear the whole particulars. You have dealt candidly with me, in shewing me the deeds, and, without giving an opinion on the case, I will promise you to communicate the whole facts fairly."

As he came forth the door was closed, and the servant who was in the passage drew back to give him egress.

"That is Mr. Hamilton, the famous banker," observed the gentleman in black, in a whisper, to his fair companion—"a very good man, they say."

At the same moment the servant replied, that Miss Barham was at home, and ushered the two up to the drawing-room, while a great deal of loud talking, with evident haste and eagerness, was heard from the chamber which they passed on the right.

"What name shall I give, sir?" demanded the servant at the drawing-room door.

"Martin," replied the stranger; and the moment after Mr. and Mrs. Martin were announced, in a loud tone.

In an elegant, though somewhat small drawing-room, with everything which could contribute to comfort and convenience around her, sat Helen Barham, not less beautiful than ever, though with a deep shade of melancholy hanging upon her fair brow, and a colour, almost too delicately lovely, in her cheek. She raised her eyes as the man threw open the door, and then started up with a look almost of alarm,

paused, and hesitated till the servant was gone, and then, with one of her radiant smiles, chasing away the cloud, like the sun at noon, she pointed to a chair, saying—"I am glad to see you—pray sit down. I know not what startled me, but the name brought back painful memories."

"I do not wonder at it, ma'am," answered Harry Martin—"though, after all, I think, if I were you, it would bring up the proudest and happiest memories that could come into my heart. Memories of having done, Miss Barham, what there are not two people in all Europe would do — ay, not only of having saved a fellow-creature from death, but of having saved him from perhaps worse destruction. I have come to thank you, ma'am—and my poor wife, too; and the first name we shall teach our baby to pray for is yours—isn't it, Jane?"

Jane Martin went round the table, and dropping upon her knees beside Helen Barham, kissed her hand, and bathed it with tears.

"Oh, no, no!" cried Helen, trying to raise her. "Pray do not do so!—you agitate—you distress me. I did but keep the promise I had made."

"Ay, ma'am, and nobly," replied Harry

Martin; "give me those that *do* keep their word in this world of promise-breakers. But Jane has got something to tell you, she will say it better than I can, for such words are so new in my mouth that they come rather awkwardly."

Helen turned an enquiring look towards Jane Martin, who had now risen, and was standing by her side, wiping away the tears that the sweet feelings of gratitude had drawn forth. "He means me to tell you, madam," said the latter, "something that I am sure, if I judge you rightly, will repay you for all you did, and all you suffered on that terrible day at York. He has determined, madam, more out of gratitude to you and one other, who has befriended us, too, in our time of need, to change his way of life altogether. We are going to a far country, ma'am, as far from England as we can get, without going out of Europe; I mean to Naples, where I had once an uncle, who is, I believe, living still. There we may do honestly and industriously, and, if possible, in time, will pay back everything that is not rightly ours."

"Oh, do so!—do so!" cried Helen, gladly; "the blessing which that very thought will give you, will be worth any other kind of happiness."

"I begin to think so too, Miss Barham," re-

plied Harry Martin; "and one thing more I will say, which is, that I know what will make me the happiest man alive."

"What is that?" said Helen; "I am sure if it be possible for me to help you I will. I cannot forget that, besides sparing my life when many other people would have taken it, you aided to deliver my brother from the power of those who would have most basely used the means of injuring him which they possessed. Tell me what it is; I am far more capable of doing something to show my gratitude now, than I have ever been before, and if money——"

"No, no!" exclaimed Harry Martin, "it is not money that I want, Miss Barham! All I wish for is an opportunity of serving you. But do you know, Miss Barham," he added, after a moment's pause, "I am almost sorry to hear you have money to spare."

"Why so?" said Helen, in some surprise.

"Why, I don't know well how to tell you what I mean," replied Harry Martin; "but it's this, you see, Miss Barham: from what I know, I don't see how you or your brother can have much money to spare, if he gets it in a way that may not some time or another bring you into a worse scrape than the last."

Helen Barham's habit of blushing had not been lost, even in all the painful scenes she had lately gone through, and the blood came warm into her cheek at the man's words, though she knew that they were not intended to offend or pain her. There was something in them, however, which caused her mind instantly to refer to her late position—to the position of danger and temptation in which she had been placed when first she was presented to the reader's eyes—and the very thought made the true modesty of her young and candid heart shrink as if from contamination.

"You are mistaken, in this instance," she said, mildly; "a great change has taken place in our situation. I cannot tell you all the particulars, for I do not know them; and, indeed, I believe on some account I have been purposely kept in the dark—but it has been discovered that a large property rightly belonging to my brother has been kept from him. It was old Mr. Carr who first told me of the facts; since then, the matter has been referred to several London lawyers, who are so perfectly convinced the property cannot be withheld any longer, that the solicitor is quite willing to advance my brother any money that he needs—more so,

indeed, than I could wish—for William is yet too young to use it rightly."

"He'll never be old enough," replied Harry Martin; "but, however, whatever is for your good is a blessing; and, I trust, notwithstanding, though God may give you, young lady, the fortune you well deserve, I shall some day be able to show you my gratitude. I wont ask to see your brother, Miss Barham, for the meeting would not be very pleasant to him or to me, but I can tell him one thing, if he would have health or happiness either, he must live a very different life from that which he was following when I knew him. Why, we ourselves, who did not stick at a trifle, as you may well suppose, used to get sick of his way of going on."

Helen Barham cast down her eyes, and for a moment or two made no reply. It was painful enough for her to think that her brother should ever have been the companion of the man who stood before her; but to hear that even the profligate, the lawless, and the reckless, were outdone by the son of her own mother, was terrible indeed. Her silence, however, arose from other sensations, likewise produced in her bosom by the words of Harry Martin. The stores of the past, the things that have been—

ay, and the things that are—are often garnered up in our hearts like the inflammable substances of a magazine, apparently cold and lifeless, but requiring only a spark to blaze forth. That spark is frequently a mere accidental word; a look, a tone will sometimes communicate the flame. There had been a deep anxiety preying upon Helen Barham for some weeks, a new anxiety, a fresh grief, which mingled with all the other painful feelings in her bosom, and produced a sort of dread, which cast an additional gloom over every prospect. She had remarked in her brother a bright red spot in the pale cheek, increasing towards nightfall, an eye full of unnatural lustre, a hurried and fluttering respiration, a slight but frequent cough—all of which she had seen once before in another, a few months previous to the time when the turf was laid upon her mother's head. She had questioned him eagerly and often; she had endeavoured to prevent him from committing excess in various ways, but he had always insisted that he was quite well, and any attempt to restrain his inclinations seemed but to irritate him, and to drive him to wild extremes. Lately she had tried hard, and successfully, to shut out his state of health from her mind: she had kept

the truth at a distance; but the words of Harry Martin not only opened her eyes, and showed her that her brother was hurrying on towards death, but that it was his own deed.

"I fear," she said, in reply—"I fear that his health has suffered very much! Indeed, he is anything but well; and I trust, when all this business is settled, to induce him to try a better climate."

"Induce him, Miss Barham," said Harry Martin—"induce him——"

He was going to add—"to try a better life," but he gazed in the fair face of Helen Barham, saw the deep melancholy that overspread it, and felt afraid that he might add one drop more of bitter to the lot of her, who, born with every endowment of person and mind which the prodigal hand of nature could bestow upon a favourite child, had been placed in circumstances where beauty was peril, where excellence was trial, and where tenderness was anguish. He would not add another word, but paused in the midst of what he was saying, and then turned abruptly to his wife, exclaiming—"Come, Jane, let us go, we are only keeping Miss Barham. God bless you, madam, and protect you. May you find kind friends wher-

ever you go, and may every one be as honest to you as you have been to me. God bless you, I say, and make you happy, and give me some opportunity of helping you when you need it."

Thus speaking, he turned away and left the room, followed by his wife; and Helen, bidding them adieu, resumed her occupations.

They had not been long gone, however, when her brother came in, with his face flushed and excited, and a look of triumph in his countenance. "I have him," he said—"I'll do for him, Helen! We have got hold of the only admission that was wanting. I'll make a beggar of him before I have done with him!"

"I hope not, William," answered Helen, reproachfully. "I hope you will make a beggar of no one upon the earth. You, of all people, William, ought to know how terrible a thing it is to be a beggar. But who is it you are talking of?"

"Ay! that I sha'n't tell you, Helen," replied William Barham, with a laugh. "I know you'd be for interfering, and that wouldn't do. The business is my own, and I'll manage it myself. You shall know nothing about it till it's all done; and who can tell if the matter may not be more for your advantage than you think."

"Well, William," rejoined Helen, with a sigh, "as I said to you yesterday, if you do not tell me more, tell me nothing. But listen to what I have to say to you. The man, Harry Martin, who was tried at York, has been here to thank me. You know very well that he took, and destroyed, those papers which were so dangerous to you. Now, I think, as you say you have money to spare, you ought to send him some immediately."

"Not I," cried William Barham, though his face for a moment had become very pale. "You say he destroyed the papers. He can't do anything against me, then—I shall send him no money. You were a fool for not letting him be hanged," and he turned sullenly from her, and left the room.

Helen Barham leaned her head upon her hand, pressed her handkerchief upon her eyes, and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER X.

THE night was dark and tempestuous, the rain beat violently against the windows of the carriage, the wind blew so vehemently as to shake it upon the springs, and the hollow moanings of the gale, as it swept down the valley of Treisam, sounded like the screams of souls in torture. Once or twice, but once or twice only, the features of the scene around were displayed for an instant by a sudden flash of lightning, and rock, and chasm, and rushing stream, swelled into a torrent by the deluge that was pouring down, started out from the darkness and instantly disappeared again. The effect was fine, but awful; and for the sake of postilions and servants, Morley Ernstein would have willingly turned back, but that the storm did not com-

mence till Freiburg was left far behind, and had not reached its height till the carriage was nearly half way through the pass, known by the gloomy name of the Valley of Hell. To go on, then, was a matter of necessity, and Morley contented himself with calling old Adam Gray into the inside of the carriage, to shelter his white hair from the storm of night. The journey, indeed, was not without danger, for the pit of Acheron was certainly never darker than the Höllen-Thal, in the intervals of the lightning; and the windings of the road, amongst rocks and streams, are conducted with a greater regard to brevity than to the traveller's neck.

"It is a dreadful night, indeed, sir," said good old Adam Gray, with a shudder, "and it seems to be a terribly wild country. Why, the carriage can scarcely get on, and I believe will be broken in pieces before we get to the end of the stage."

"Oh, no!" replied Morley; "it is too well built for that, Adam; and the darkness makes you think every jolt worse than it is. Through this very valley General Moreau made his famous retreat, bringing with him his baggage and artillery, so it is impossible that it can be so very bad."

"It's bad enough, sir, any way!" exclaimed Adam Gray, as the carriage passed over an immense stone, producing a jolt that nearly knocked the heads of the travellers against the top of the vehicle. "I would almost sooner be a cannon than a Christian to go through here—at least in this dark night!"

"I certainly should have waited till to-morrow," replied Morley, "if I had known we should have such a storm, but now it is not to be helped, and the stage, I believe, is not a very long one. We must sleep where we can for to-night, as there is no use of attempting to go on to Schaffhausen."

The way, however, seemed to Adam Gray interminably long, for the German drivers, with very proper caution, proceeded at a rate certainly somewhat slower than that with which an English broad-wheeled waggon wends its way along the drawing-room roads of our own favoured land. At the end of about an hour the storm decreased, the sharp gusts of wind ceased almost entirely, the lightning no longer illuminated the valley from time to time with its fierce glare, and the rain itself subsided into a thin and drizzling mist, through which the lamps of the carriage poured a red and con-

fused light, occasionally catching upon some wild rock, or bringing forth from the darkness the large boll of some old tree, but generally showing nothing but the dim expanse of vapour which wrapped the harsh features of the valley in a foggy shroud.

How long they had thus gone on through that tempestuous night, Morley Ernstein did not know, but he judged by guess that the next post house could not be far off, when the sound of what seemed a distant call met his ear, and, turning to old Adam Gray, he said —"Well, Adam, your rough journey will soon be over; we must be coming near Steig, for I hear voices, and some persons shouting."

"Perhaps some one has got hurt in this terrible night," replied Adam Gray. "God send us well out of this horrid place!"

Morley Ernstein listened eagerly, for the old man's words brought suddenly into his mind the very probable case of some accident having happened in such a storm and such a scene; and, letting down the window, he put his head out, gazing round to see if he could descry anything, but in vain.

A moment or two after, however, a loud shout from the right, and at no great dis-

tance, showed that the lamps of the carriage, though of no great service either to the travellers or the postilions attached to it, had sent their glare far enough into the gloom of the valley to reach the eyes of some person in distress. The shout was repeated again and again, and Morley thought that he distinguished an English tone and English words, though let it be remembered that such sounds may very well be heard in Germany, without the speakers being Englishmen or knowing one syllable of our native tongue. This Morley recollected, but, nevertheless, he was just as anxious to give assistance as if he had been quite sure that the persons calling for aid were his fellow-countrymen.

The postilions, although they must have heard the cry fully as well as those within the carriage, did not seem in the slightest degree disposed to stop, but went on with the same indifferent jog-trot, which probably they would have continued if the father of each of them had been drowning in the stream below. Three times did Morley himself call to them before they condescended to pay any attention. They at length brought up, however, and quietly asked what was the matter. Without waiting to in-

form them, but bidding the servants get down to aid him, Morley sprang out of the vehicle, drew one of the lanterns with his own hands from the socket, and called aloud, in very good German, to ascertain where were the personages who had been so vociferously appealing for help.

The reply left him no doubt as to its being an Englishman who now spoke, for the very first sentence was adorned with one of those oaths which unhappily are but too often in the mouths of our countrymen. "Holloa! hoy!" cried the voice. "D—n you, if you don't make haste you will be too late! This way, I say—this way!"

It was not without some difficulty, however, that any means were found of reaching the spot from whence the voice proceeded. The bank was steep and rugged, large masses of rock and stone obstructed the way, and the darkness of the night, increased by the mist, prevented Morley Ernstein and his servant from seeing more than a few yards even by the aid of the lantern, which the young gentleman himself carried. All this delayed them much, but still they advanced, guided by several voices talking rapidly and eagerly together; and bad French and bad English were to be heard

spoken in sharp and sometimes angry tones, between people who seemed to have a very great difficulty in making themselves mutually understood.

At length, however, the exact place where all this was going on became more distinct; and the forms of two men, two or three women, a child, four horses, and an overturned coach, were seen against a back ground of white spray and foam, occasioned by the stream—now swelled, as I have before said, into a torrent, and dashing in angry fury amidst the crags and rocky fragments which encumbered the valley. The men and most of the women were all gathered closely round the carriage, and seemed to be holding on thereby as if endeavouring to move it, while one of the group was giving eager orders to another, in a somewhat extraordinary compound of English and French, to attach the horses to the overthrown vehicle in a particular manner, and endeavour to pull it up; while the man to whom he spoke seemed to have taken the wise resolution, in the first place, of not understanding him, and in the next place, of not doing what he was told when he did.

Such was the state of things when Morley Ernstein approached within a few yards of the

carriage, and perceived that the vehicle, and whatever it might contain, was certainly in a very dangerous position, being balanced as nicely as can be conceived, upon the edge of a second bank, and apparently only kept from falling over into the stream by the weight of the persons who held it down. Such was the first fact that presented itself to Morley's mind; but there was another point which struck him nearly at the same time—namely, that the figures of two, at least, out of the personages in the group, were quite familiar to him; and the combination of the voice which he had heard, with the appearance of the people now before him, instantly brought to his recollection our old acquaintance Harry Martin, and his wife. The latter, it would seem, instantly recognised the young Baronet in the person who now came to their aid, for at the very moment that Morley recognised her husband, she exclaimed—"Oh, how fortunate! It is Sir Morley, Harry—it is Sir Morley Ernstein!"

"That is luck, indeed!" cried Harry Martin. "We shall now have somebody to help us."

The matter was soon explained; the Swiss driver of the vehicle in which Martin had engaged a certain number of places for himself

and his family, had, in the darkness of the night, mistaken a small cart-road on the right, for the highway to Steig, had soon become embarrassed amongst the rocks, and had ended by overturning the carriage in the most dangerous part of the valley.

"The worst part of the whole job, is," said Harry Martin, "that the old woman is a good deal hurt, I am afraid; and we couldn't get her out of the carriage, as it lies there. I had nobody to help me but this d—d fellow, and he will not help at all."

With the aid of Morley and his servants, the vehicle was soon freed from the dangerous situation in which it hung, and drawn back into the bad cart-road from which it had strayed. The jolting, however, was so terrible to poor old Mrs. More—who had, as her son-in-law declared, received considerable injuries—that she now very willingly agreed to do that which she had at first refused, and quit the rough and ill-hung coach for Morley's more comfortable conveyance.

Finding that the distance to the post-house was not more than an English mile, the young Baronet determined to go the rest of the way on foot, sending only one servant with his car

riage, and giving the places thus left vacant to the women, whom he had found in such a deplorable situation in the valley. Harry Martin's wife and the little boy took their seats beside old Mrs. More, in the inside. There was room for another behind, but there were still two persons to be provided for, both foreigners —one seeming the mistress, and the other the maid. The lady, however, insisted that her attendant should go, saying—"You are bruised, Marguerite, and I am not; I can walk very well."

The attendant needed no great pressing, but took her place at once, and Morley Ernstein, offering his arm to her mistress, gave directions to his courier to remain with the Swiss, in order to aid him in getting his carriage safely back into the main road, and then proceeded, with Harry Martin on his right hand, talking sometimes to one of his companions, sometimes to the other. The lady spoke very little English, but French she understood thoroughly, although her accent betrayed the tones of a southern land; and, now that the danger was over, she laughed with light-hearted gaiety at the misadventures of the night, though a tone of sadness mingled every now and then with her

merriment, when she mentioned the situation of the poor old lady, Mrs. More. The impression produced by her conversation upon the mind of Morley Ernstein was altogether agreeable; and indeed it must be a hard case, where a young and graceful woman and a young and accomplished man, finding their way on together along a road they do not know, in a dull and drizzly night, dislike each other very much in the end.

The mind of Harry Martin seemed, for the time, wholly taken up with the accident which had happened to Mrs. More, for whom he apparently entertained as much affection as if he had been her son. Although he in no degree affected to have forgotten Morley Ernstein, and spoke to him in a tone of respect—perhaps one might say, of gratitude—yet he referred, not even by a word, to the circumstances of their previous acquaintance. Morley himself kept aloof from any such topic also, on account of the proximity of his servants' ears, though he determined, if occasion served, to enquire into all which had lately occurred to his companion, and to ascertain by what train of events he now found him in a remote part of Germany, with his wife and

family. The opportunity was soon given to him. On their arrival at Steig, they found the little post-house full of bustle and confusion. Poor Mrs. More had been taken out of the carriage, and removed to bed, it having been found that her leg was broken in two places. Her daughter was in the room, attending upon her, with no little distress of mind; and the fair Italian, who had accompanied Morley Ernstein—though there was evidently a little struggle in her breast as to whether she should stay below in the hall, and pass the evening with the young English gentleman, or go up and give what assistance she could to the sufferer up stairs—decided, at length, in favour of the more amiable, though less pleasant occupation. Bidding Morley a graceful good night, she left him and Harry Martin in possession of the great, odd-shaped room, which is almost always to be found on the lower story of a German inn, and proceeded to the chamber of Mrs. More, where, we may as well add, in passing, she shewed much good humour, and benevolent attention, aiding Jane in putting her child to bed, and soothing and tending her mother.

In the meantime, Morley Ernstein's servants

busied themselves in preparing their master's room, taking care of the carriage, and removing a part of the contents to the house; while the courier paid the postilion within a few florins of the sum he intended to charge his master, ordered the best of everything for his own supper, and the next best for that of Sir Morley, and looked into the saloon three times to see what the young gentleman was about, and to prove that he was very attentive.

On the part of Sir Morley Ernstein, the first proceeding was to send for the post-master, and to enquire where a surgeon could be procured. No good one was to be heard of nearer than Freiburg; and, accordingly, a man on horseback was sent off by Sir Morley's directions, to bring the best bone-setter that the capital of the Breisgau could afford. Then—after various enquiries as to the real situation of the old woman, after some going to and fro between her chamber and the saloon, and all the little bustles, orders and counter-orders, enquiries, and replies, examinations and discoveries, precautions, preparations, and annoyances, which attend the first arrival at an out of the way inn, on a dark and rainy night, after a journey of adventures and mishaps—after all this was con-

cluded, I say, Morley Ernstein leaned his arm upon one side of the large china stove, while Harry Martin stood upon the other, with his arms crossed upon his broad, bull-like chest.

"You see, Sir Morley," said the latter, at length, as if in explanation of his feelings towards Mrs. More—"you see, that I am very anxious about this old woman, for she has been kind to me ever since I first knew her, and ended by saving my life. She was the first one, sir, that ever made me think—love being out of the question—that any one could care about me for myself, and she has always kept tight to the same way of acting by me; though, God knows, little was the good I ever did her or hers! However, I am sure I ought to be well contented with the world, for when I was at the hardest pinch that ever man was at, I found people to be generous to me, people to be true to me, and people to be zealous for me, which, altogether, was what saved my life, when I as much deserved to be hanged as any man that ever was born."

"How was that?" demanded Morley Ernstein, not doubting, indeed, the truth of Harry Martin's confession, but merely desirous of hear-

ing something more of his history. "I left you in a fair way of making your escape, I thought."

"Ay, sir, so you did," replied his companion, "but I was fool enough to put my foot in a trap, and was caught. I should have been hanged, too, if it hadn't been for that noble girl, Miss Helen Barham, who should be a queen if I had my will. She kept her word with me in spite of all that any one could say, and she'll go to heaven for it, if it was for nothing else, for she's given me time to think and to change my life altogether, and that's what the law would not have done. My wife was reading me the Bible, the other day, where it says—'There's joy in heaven over one sinner that repents;' and if it be so, which I don't pretend to doubt, she must have made the place very happy—which, indeed, I suppose it was before—for certainly I was as bad as I could be, but now I have repented a good deal, and mean to do so a great deal more. It would not have been the case, sir, if it happened any other way at all; if they had hanged me, I should have died game; and if I had got off by some trick of the lawyers, some flaw in the indictment, or something of that kind, I should have been at the old work again in a week; but to see that beau-

tiful girl sit there, badgered by the judge and all the lawyers, and quietly make up her mind to go to prison sooner than to break her word with a man like me,—why, sir, it changed my whole heart in a moment; and I thought to myself, if I get off this time I will lead a different life altogether for your sake, you angel, just to show you that I'm not altogether so bad as people think!"

By degrees, Morley Ernstein obtained a general idea of all that occurred to Harry Martin, since he left him in the north of England. It was not with little interest that the young Englishman questioned him concerning Helen Barham, and we need hardly say that it was with pleasure he heard, not only her praises from the man beside him, but an account of the actions which had called forth his gratitude. It was with great satisfaction, too, he learnt that a change had taken place in her pecuniary affairs, and that competence, if not wealth, was at all events assured to her, for though he had written to Mr. Hamilton about her before he left England, and placed her future fate beyond doubt, he was not a little pleased to find that she would be dependent upon no one. The relative situation into

which they had been thrown, the high qualities of her mind, the compassion that he had felt for her—ay, the very temptation which had at one moment assailed him, had left a tenderness in his feelings towards Helen Barham, which was certainly not love, and yet was something more than friendship. It was a sensation, strange, complicated, difficult to be defined even to his own mind; it was the blending of many memories and many sweet impressions into something like the affection of a father for a child, something like the love of a brother for a sister, and yet differing from both, inasmuch as there was nothing conventional in it, inasmuch as there was no bond or tie of duty, inasmuch as it differed from the common forms and modes into which the rules of society shape our feelings as well as our actions.

The presence of such sensations in his bosom was rendered more sensible to him, by the conversation taking place at that moment, than it had ever been before, and he paused for some short time thinking that it was all very strange, and enquiring into the nature of the things within him. The man Martin, in the meantime, remained beside him, with his keen, intelligent eyes fixed upon his countenance,

apparently reading, or attempting to read, the thoughts that were busy in his breast.

At length he said—"Well, Sir Morley, I am going to bid you good night, and I thank you very heartily for all the kindness you have shewn me. There's one thing I can't help saying, however—and you must not think me impudent or meddling for saying it, though I must not mention any names—but I can't help thinking, sir, that you have thrown away your own happiness, and quitted the good, and the true, and the beautiful, to follow one that you'll find out some day, perhaps, when hope, and comfort, and peace are all ruined together. Forgive me for saying it, sir, but I owe it to one who has been kind to me to give him a warning. I wish you good night, sir!"

"Stay, stay!" cried Morley; "explain what you mean, at least, before you go."

"No, no, I can't say any more," replied Harry Martin, moving steadily towards the door. "I have said all that I have a right to say; and I only add, that, if you watch you will see, and if you enquire you will find out. You will be convinced, at last, although I should think that you had had enough to convince you already."

Without waiting for further question, he turned and quitted the room, and Morley remained bewildered and surprised, applying the words just spoken to Juliet Carr, although they referred to quite a different object; and asking himself how the man who had just left him could have gained such a knowledge of his affairs. Surprise was certainly the first feeling, but suspicion is a guest that finds but too easy admission into the human heart.

"Peace, and comfort, and happiness are, indeed, gone already," he said, "and gone by her act—must I call it by her fault? Can this be trifling?—Love, they say, is blind.—Can it be coquetry? Can she be sporting with my misery?"

But, as he put the question to his own heart, the idea of Juliet Carr, in all her beauty, in all her frank simplicity, in all that open-hearted candour which gave the crowning grace to her demeanour, rose up before his sight, and he became not only angry with himself for having given credit to one word against her, but angry and indignant also with the man who had uttered aught that could raise a doubt of her sincerity in his mind.

CHAPTER XI.

EARLY on the following morning the carriage of Morley Ernstein stood prepared for departure before the little inn at Steig. He had sent to ask after the health of the old woman who had suffered from the accident of the preceding night, and had heard, certainly with pleasure, that the surgeon made a favourable report of her situation, though he at once pronounced that she must remain for many weeks in the room to which she had been carried. For Martin himself the young gentleman had not asked; nor did he speak more than a few words to him when he met him at the bottom of the stairs, in descending to go into his carriage. Although convinced that the man intended well, he was still angry, to say the truth, at the words which

the other had addressed to him on the preceding evening; the more angry, perhaps, because he felt irritated with himself on account of the shade of doubt which lingered in his own mind, which he had combated during the whole night without being able to conquer it, which had fled but to return, and which still raised its head against reason and argument — ay, and even conviction itself.

With one of the party which he had encountered the night before, however, he did stop to speak for some minutes. It was with the Italian lady who had been his companion on foot from the place where the accident had occurred to the inn; and he now perceived clearly—a fact of which he had only a faint notion from his glance during the preceding evening—namely, that she was a young and very pretty woman; not exactly beautiful, for there was not a feature in her face which deserved that often misapplied epithet, if we except the eyes. They, indeed, were remarkably fine, as most Italian eyes are—bright, sparkling, and full of merry light, but chastened withal by a frequent look of feeling and thoughtful meditation. To behold them, and to watch their expression for any length of time, reminded one of a sunshiny

prospect with an occasional cloud floating over it, and varying by its soft shadows the sparkling brightness of the scene.

With her, then, Morley stopped to speak for some time, enquiring after her health, and hoping that she had not suffered from the accidents of the night before. She replied, gaily, that she had nothing to complain of, except that she was stopped on her journey, which, indeed, was not only an annoyance, but a misfortune. It would be two or three days, she said, before the carriage would be able to proceed, and delay would be most inconvenient to her, as she had engagements in Milan and Venice, on account of which she had determined on going by the Brenner as the pass most certain to be open. If she could but reach Constance, she would soon be able to find a conveyance for the rest of the journey, which was not to be done at Steig.

Morley hesitated; English prudence came in the way—the question which every Englishman first puts to himself, "What will people say," instantly suggested itself; and it took him a minute, which under such circumstances is a long time, ere he could make up his mind to do that to which good-nature prompted him. How

often is it that good feelings are panders to bad actions? Alas! too frequently do they lead us so near the door of evil places, that we are tempted to go in. Morley Ernstein took his resolution at length, and replied, that if she were not bound by any means to go on in the same conveyance which had brought her so far, a seat in his carriage was much at her service.

Many persons may, perhaps, enquire whether her sparkling dark eyes had anything to do with Morley's civility. I can conscientiously reply—"Nothing in the world." He would have made the same proposal if she had been as ugly as Cerberus: perhaps more readily; and the only part that her bright eyes could take in the business, was to make her even a more dangerous companion than that three-headed gentleman himself.

She did not refuse the young Baronet's proposal, but laughed with an arch look as she accepted it, saying—"You are afraid of your reputation. Is it not so? All Englishmen are so prudent and careful! We Italians have much more confidence in virtue, bad as they call us; but I am not the least afraid, though my reputation is much more likely to be endangered than yours—for I, too, have a reputation to lose."

She spoke the last words somewhat proudly, and there was a frankness in her whole demeanour which pleased Morley Ernstein, and set him more at ease. The carriage was ordered to wait for half an hour, the voiturier was easily settled with, the trunks and packages were removed to Morley Ernstein's chariot, and the young Englishman followed the fair Italian into the vehicle, a third place being taken therein by her maid. Good Adam Gray looked grave; and although his brow was somewhat cleared when he saw that his master and the strange lady were not to be without a companion, yet, to say sooth, the old man was not well satisfied. Whether it was experience or nature taught him that, for a young man like Morley to sit side by side, during a somewhat long journey, with a gay and pretty Italian girl was a dangerous sort of proximity, matters very little; but Adam Gray could not help fancying that the matter might end ill, having no great faith in the virtue of any lady born beyond the precincts of the four seas, and, perhaps, not quite so much confidence in his master's powers of resisting the impetuous fire of his own nature as Morley really deserved.

Now might I, dear reader, trace the journey

of the young Englishman and his fair companion, tell all that took place between them, and point out how she gradually won upon Morley Ernstein—amused, pleased, interested him. I might dilate upon all the little incidents of the road, all the attentions which he thought himself bound to pay her, all those small and accidental circumstances which occasionally lead people on, to use Shakspeare's expression, upon "The primrose way to the everlasting bonfire." There were many of those things took place—there was the flash of similar thought, there was the admiration of similar objects, there were the slight differences that give variety, there were the touches of feeling which, like the cabalistic words pronounced by the magician, in the tales of eastern lands, open the heart, however firmly it may be locked against intrusion. But we must pause upon very few of these matters, and will only notice two little incidents, and one brief part of their conversation.

At the moment they set out, Morley made up his mind not to stay at Schaffhausen, but to go on to Constance at once; and it must be admitted that he took this resolution from an unacknowledged conviction that he was not

doing the most prudent thing in the world, in travelling with the fair Italian at all. In fact, he wished not to make more than one day of the journey. It was later, however, than he had calculated upon when they arrived at Schaffhausen; the hour of the table d'hôte was over; dinner could not be obtained for an hour; and the host enquired, as if it were a thing absolutely necessary to be done, at what time they would like to see the falls. The lady looked in Morley's face, and left him to answer. It seemed to him that there would be a rudeness in not giving her a choice; and the consequence was, they went to see the falls together, by the light of a fine afternoon, and returning to Schaffhausen, remained there that night.

In the saloon to which they were shown there was a piano; and Morley's companion, in one of the unoccupied moments—of which there are more in inns than in any other places, perhaps, in the world—walked up to the instrument, ran her fingers over the keys, with a touch of complete mastery, and hummed, rather than sang, a few bars of a popular opera; but it was done in a manner which left Morley in no doubt that her voice itself had been culti-

vated with the utmost care. It may easily be supposed, then, that the evening did not pass without music—without that enjoyment, which, whether we may consider it an entity or not, is in all its forms one of the greatest blessings that ever was bestowed on man.

Music—what is it? How can one say what it really is? Substantial it is certainly not, or rather, I should say, material. Where is it to be found? Is it not in the spirit itself? Is it not, in fact, one of the highest and holiest qualities of the soul; a perception of that harmony which we may well believe to be an attribute of God, from finding it in all his works —from seeing it in all his revelations of himself. In what part of creation is it that the heart of man may not find music, if he will? Sweet sounds may, indeed, by the ear, produce the impression most distinctly; but sights presented to the eye will raise exactly the same sensations in the spirit; and sounds, and sights, and sense, all link themselves together in memory, shewing their near affinity to each other and their reference to one harmonious whole. Nevertheless, on this earth the grand expression of that innate music—which, as fire is latent in every existing material thing—lies hid in every object of the

spirit's action, is still to be found in the union of sweet tones; and as the reader may easily imagine, from all we have said of his character, no one was ever more deeply moved by the power of harmony than Morley Ernstein. He listened, then, entranced to the singing of the fair Italian, perfect as it was in every respect, for nature had given her, in her rich Italian voice, an instrument such as no art could fabricate; and science and long study had taught her to wield all its powers with unrivalled effect. Taste, too, and, apparently, deep feeling, were not wanting; and when she had sung something exquisitely beautiful, and then looked up in Morley's face to see the effect it had produced on him, there was as much music in her eyes as on her lips.

These, reader, are the two incidents which I promised to relate; and now for the conversation. Their second day's journey was verging to a close; a sort of soft languor had come over the fair Italian—a touch of melancholy, such as almost every one must feel in drawing nigh the moment of parting from one with whom we have held sweet intercourse even for a few short hours. They had glances of the Rhine as they rolled along; they caught the distant towers of

Constance, to which they were rapidly approaching; gleams of far mountains, and, once, a sight of the wide lake, met their eyes as they advanced; and all told them that the time of separation was coming. The maid was apparently asleep; and, at all events, Morley and his companion were speaking French, which she did not understand. The sights before their eyes, the yellow evening tint that was spreading over the sky, not only led their thoughts to that moment of parting, but brought the conversation suddenly to it also. The lady looked up, from the reverie of a minute or two, with a smile, in which there was a touch of the sadness of which I have spoken.

"Well," she said, "we are now drawing near to our journey's end. I have to thank you much for your kindness. It will prove of great service to me, and, I trust, be of no disservice to you. You see we have passed along our way without meeting any one, so that neither your reputation nor mine can have suffered."

"I know it is very foolish," answered Morley, in his usual frank manner; "but I do not deny that I may feel the prejudices of my country in these respects, though not sufficiently, I hope, to prevent me from doing what

is courteous and right. But still, I do think it would be a dangerous practice, generally speaking, for young and pretty ladies, such as yourself, to travel alone with any man unallied to them in blood."

"Why?" demanded the Italian lady, simply.

It was rather a difficult question to answer with sincerity; and, after hesitating for a moment, Morley Ernstein said—"Why, nobody can tell where they go to—how they spend their time. In short, they throw off that sort of responsibility that they owe to society—the eyes of the world are no longer upon them."

"And is it only the eyes of the world which keep people from doing wrong?" asked the lady.

Morley laughed, and, wishing to change the subject, he answered—"Many other inconveniences might happen, you know—they might fall in love with each other, or do a thousand things of that kind."

"Oh, then, I am quite safe!" replied the lady—"for I never yet saw the man whom I felt the least inclination to fall in love with in my life."

"Perhaps you are incapable of love?" said Morley. "There are some women so happily constituted by nature, that they never know

what it is to be touched by any but the more tranquil affections."

"Perhaps such is the case," she rejoined, quite seriously—"or perhaps, what is more likely, I may spend all my feelings upon matters of imagination. A song, a piece of music, a scene in a play, will move me in a degree that I cannot describe. I have generally remarked, and am inclined to believe it is an invariable rule, that people of a strong imagination are very seldom troubled with strong affections."

Her observation threw Morley into a reverie. He asked himself whether it were true, and paused in doubt, not having sufficient experience to solve the question at once by his own knowledge, and plunging into those metaphysical deductions which lead as often to what is false as to what is true.

The lady went on to say—"I hope—indeed, I am sure, that such is the case with myself; for I would not for the world feel such passions as I see depicted and hear told. Thus I know myself to be perfectly safe, and can trust myself in any situation without fear."

"And yet," rejoined Morley, with a meaning smile, "you are an Italian."

"True," she answered, with one of her sparkling looks; "but perhaps the very fact of the existence of such strong passions amongst my countrywomen, as you would insinuate, may have been my warning and safeguard."

"Where there is no danger, there is no need of a safeguard," said Morley. "You acknowledge, then, that it is by reason, and not by nature, that you are guided."

"You must not press me too hard," exclaimed the lady, laughing—"you know we women never understand how to argue. All I know is, that I never did love, and never shall love any man —not even you, fair sir," she added, laughing— "though you have certainly been much more kind and courteous than most of your countrymen; and the only way I can repay you is, by asking you to come and see me, should you visit Venice, or, at least, should you be there some two months hence. I may then be enabled to return your courtesy in some shape, and perhaps may procure you the means of seeing more of the City of the Waves than foreigners usually do see."

"I will certainly avail myself of your invitation," replied Morley; "but you forget that, owing to the strange way in which our

acquaintance commenced, I am ignorant, up to the present moment, even of your name."

"Oh, that omission will soon be remedied," answered the lady—"my name is Veronica Pratesi. You will easily find me in Venice."

Thus ended the conversation to which we wished to refer. The lady and Morley spent the evening together at Constance, and part of the next morning. A carriage was easily procured to convey her on her way, and Morley placed her in it, and bade her adieu with feelings of regret.

Her sparkling manner, too, was somewhat overshadowed by passing clouds. At one moment, she was gay and bright as ever; at the next, fell into deep thought. She bade him farewell, however, with all the levity of a Frenchwoman; but as soon as the adieu was spoken, and while something was doing to the interminable harness, she gazed down into the bottom of the vehicle, as if to prevent herself from having any more last words. The moment the driver's whip cracked for departure she turned round to look at Morley again; and her face was then overclouded.

CHAPTER XII.

"HA! HA!" said Lieberg, as he sat at breakfast with Morley Ernstein, in the Golden Stag, at Munich—"so you met with the cold and fair Veronica, and actually travelled with her in your own carriage. I trust, Morley, you did not fall in love with her, for there is no hope there. When she first appeared at the opera at Naples——"

"What! she is an actress, then!" demanded Morley Ernstein.

"A singer—a singer," replied Lieberg—"the famous cantatrice. But, as I was saying, when first she appeared at Naples, all the dissolute old nobles of that kingdom, and half-a-dozen others of your own, Morley, thought no expense would be too great to add this fair linnet to their aviary. Various were the proposals made to

her, more flattering to her avarice than her virtue; but to every offer of the kind Veronica returned but one answer—that of silent contempt. Then came the young, and the gay, and the fascinating; and many a woman, Morley, as you well know, surrenders to the wordy siege of a penniless young libertine, who has resisted the golden bombardment of his grandfather. But it was all in vain. Veronica gave them to understand that she objected to young fools just as much as to old ones. Some were driven into the despair of matrimony, and made what they called honourable proposals, after having made what, by a plain inference, she was bound to consider the reverse. But Veronica answered, that whatever she thought of their former offers, she thought still worse of these, adding, that whatever folly she did commit, it should not at least be the folly of marriage. Every one then said that she would make her own choice, and would select some one, either for his rank, his person, or his mind. But four years and more have since passed; all ranks, classes, conditions, and degrees, have been at her feet, and Veronica has continued to shew herself exactly the same piece of ice which she from the first declared herself to be."

"In fact," said Morley, "a cold coquette."

"No," answered Lieberg, gravely—"no. I was at Naples the time the thing first began, and I must do her the justice to say, she gave no encouragement to any one. People always will seek what is difficult to be had; and that quality, together with her singing, her fine eyes, and her beautiful figure, were the great attractions. She sets up for a sort of Corinne, too, writes poetry, goes about and sees the world, makes an immense deal by her singing, and is a person very much recherché in Venice, I can assure you."

"Is she a Venetian?" demanded Morley.

"No," replied Lieberg—"she is a Milanese, but she lives principally in Venice, because, as she says truly, it is a city without noise, and there is nothing she abhors so much as the rolling of carriage-wheels, except the plaudits of a theatre."

"Then the fact simply is," said Morley, "she is a woman without passions, and whose vanity takes a high tone."

"In the last, you are right," answered Lieberg —"with regard to the first, I doubt. There is something in the flashing of her eye, in the brightness of her smile, and, occasionally, in the

impetuous torrent of her song, that gives the lie to her whole conduct. But as I do not know her in private life, and never intend to know her either, I cannot say, with any certainty, what is really beneath the appearance of coldness. I never put myself in a situation to fall in love with a woman with whom I am not likely to succeed; and if you will take my advice, Morley, you will keep out of the way of Veronica Pratesi, especially as you are very fond of music."

"I am not at all afraid," replied Morley; "there is not the least chance of my ever falling in love with a barrel organ, let the tunes be ever so pretty."

Lieberg smiled, well pleased to see that a bitterness not natural to his young companion still held possession of him, so far as to affect even his speech upon ordinary occasions. The conversation dropped there, and at the end of about ten days, once more in full companionship, their carriages were rolling down into the valley of the Inn.

I forget who it is that has said, that there is consolation in all things. Perhaps he meant *for all things;* but I believe that the observation were more just when taken in the most apparent

sense—namely, that from all things that do surround us, we may extract consolation if we will. I have dwelt upon this topic already, perhaps, at too great length; and what I have said respecting the scenery on the Rhine, and its effect upon the mind of Morley Ernstein, need be repeated here in regard to the scenery of the Tyrol: only, as the objects around him were here grander and wilder, so the impressions conveyed were more strong, more elevating, and also more permanent.

It would seem to me impossible, did I not know that it is frequently done, for any man to stand in the presence of gigantic mountains, or dwell long amidst the snowy peaks, and cloud-mantled summits of the Alps, without finding his heart enlarged and his spirit raised by the sublime aspect of the world around him. It is possible, however—but too possible; and, although such was not the case with Morley Ernstein—although he felt his bosom expand, as it were, to take in the sensations produced by such majestic sights—the mind of his companion remained unchanged, whatever was the scenery through which he passed. And yet, let me not be mistaken; perhaps his mind also did undergo some alteration, not in

its nature, not in its character, but in its capacity. The evil spirit might, in its own dark purposes, assume a loftier range, but without the slightest difference in the ends proposed, without a change even in the means employed. The sensation of joy and satisfaction at any progress made, of dark malevolence and angry impatience when aught obstructed its course, might become more energetic, more grand, more awful, though all the rest remained the same. There is a sublime in bad as well as in good, and the feelings of Lieberg, it would appear, were, in intensity, as much influenced by the sights which presented themselves hourly to his eye in the Tyrol, as even that of his companion.

One thing, however, is to be remarked, the country in which they now were was quite new to Morley, but not so to Lieberg. He had seen it often before, and the freshness of first impressions was at an end. Nevertheless, he gladly took part with his fellow-traveller in all his wanderings through that bright scenery; he climbed the peaks of the mountains with him; he gazed down into the valleys; he trod the wide tracks of snow; he accompanied him through the deep woods of pines; he stood upon

the edge of the beetling precipice, or gazed over the wild dark lake; and it must be said, that his companionship gave additional charms to the expedition. Untiring in mind and in body, seeming never to know weariness for a moment, always well pleased at whatever course was taken, and always deriving a fresh current of thoughts, equally new and striking, from every change of scene that presented itself, Lieberg kept the thoughts of Morley Ernstein in a continual state of excitement, pleasing, though too strong. Occasionally, indeed, some of those strange observations, or perverted trains of reasoning, to which I have already adverted more than once, would burst forth, as it were, irrepressibly; and dark and awful words, betokening a spirit angry with, and rebellious to the will of God, would startle Morley at the very moment when his own heart felt inclined to raise itself in praise and adoration.

It was thus one day, after climbing nearly to the summit of a high peak, that they stood with their feet among the fresh-fallen snow of the preceding night. There was a bright blue sky above them, and a light cloud rolled round the edge of the mountain, about half way down; while beyond it—bursting forth in strong relief of

light and shade—appeared one of those splendid valleys, surrounded on every side by Alps, and a thousand lesser hills rising up from the bottom of the depth, and bearing high their ancient castles to catch the noon-day sun. Morley gazed round with feelings of love and gratitude towards that Being who has robed the earth in splendour, and cast a mantle of beauty over all his works. But then, even then, as their eyes rested upon an infinite multitude of things, varying through every form of loveliness, and running up in magnificent harmony, from the fair delicate flower on the edge of the snow, to the stupendous sublimity of the icy crags above their head—it was then, even then, that Lieberg, after several minutes of dark thought, exclaimed, "Where shall man flee from God, from him who has pronounced himself a God of vengeance—from him whose will is death and destruction—who has allotted a portion of sorrow to every being he has created, and cast the miserable insects he has formed into a sea of wretchedness, and strife, and mutual destruction? Where shall man flee from this fierce God? If he go into the cities, the pestilence and the sword, the midnight robber, the slow disease, the poisoned cup, the faithless paramour,

disappointed hopes, agonized limbs, pangs, and death, meet him there; he can scarcely breathe the air without drawing in some calamity; he can scarcely lay himself down to rest without finding an asp upon his pillow. If he climb to the top of the mountains, and take refuge in the solitude of these eternal hills, the lightning and the rending fragment, the false footing and the thundering avalanche follow him there, and crush the writhing object of tyrannical power, as man himself sets his foot upon the worm."

Morley turned round, and gazed at him with sensations of wonder and horror; but after a moment's pause, the awful cloud which had hung upon Lieberg's fine brow passed away, and noticing the expression of his companion's countenance with a smile, he added—"You are surprised, Morley, to find such gloomy feelings in one so gay as I am; but, perhaps, it may be the conviction of all life's many miseries that teaches me so eagerly to drain its scanty joys."

"No, Lieberg, no," answered Morley, somewhat sternly; "I was not surprised at finding such gloomy feelings; but I was surprised at finding such impious thoughts, and hearing such blasphemous words."

"But are they not true ones?" demanded Lieberg, with his eye flashing. "For what did God make man, but to curse him?"

"Man is his own curse," replied Morley. "We see it in everything. Are not his luxuries and his vices the cause of his diseases? Are not his strife and contention the effect of his own pampered passions? Are not almost all the evils that beset him, in a civilized state, the work of his own refractory will, opposed to the declared will of God? You may say that God formed him with those passions, and therefore that still the curse was his; but God gave them to him for good, not for evil; and not only with beneficent generosity left him to choose the good or evil course, according to his own volition, but guarded him against the one by warning and exhortation, and persuaded him to the other by every inducement, and every reward. Man is his own curse, Lieberg; man is his own curse, and if, as we daily see, he brings two-thirds, at least, of the misery that exists, upon his own head, by his own act, we may very well conclude, that the rest of the load also was purchased in times past by errors and disobedience of the same kind."

"By eating an apple in a garden," said

Lieberg, with a sneer, turning on his heel to descend the mountain.

" By rebellion against God, in some shape!" replied Morley.

Lieberg paused suddenly upon the verge of the crag, with his eye flashing fiercely, as if from personal offence, and for an instant the same demon-like expression came over his whole face, and even form, which had once caught the eye of Helen Barham. As he stood there, with his fine limbs thrown into strong action while balancing himself proudly upon the very edge of the precipice, and with the dark shadow on his haughty features, he certainly looked like one of the fallen spirits come down to hold dangerous communion with mortal men. The passion which moved him, however, passed away in a moment, and, without saying another word, he proceeded in his descent.

Though nothing that could be called a dispute had taken place, yet this conversation cast a shadow both upon Morley and Lieberg, during the rest of the day. They proceeded in the afternoon to Meran, and put up at the little inn, where stories of Hofer, and thoughts of past times, served, like the evening sun, to clear the clouds away, and they rose for their journey the following morning in a more cheerful mood.

I have said this book is not a road-book—I wish to Heaven it were, for there are few things more pleasant than journeying lightly along, taking the reader as one's companion, and discussing with him, in a quiet, easy kind of way, sometimes the bright and beautiful things of nature, sometimes the follies and absurdities of man; telling a story here, gleaning an anecdote there; moralizing on the strange destinies of states and individuals; looking into the domestic home of the peasant in one place, sitting down with the statesman in his retirement in another; sometimes listening to the thunders of eloquence, sometimes to the music of the shepherd's pipe. But all this must not be, and we must hurry upon our way with Morley and his companion, passing along by the side of the clear and sparkling Adige, and issuing forth into the plains of Lombardy; but, strange to say, with far different feelings from those which are described by universal tourists in the language of conventional admiration for the land of song and ancient arts.

The weather in the Tyrol had been fine and warm, for the season of the year. The days had been clear, the nights fine, as if summer had come back in the train of autumn, to usurp, for a time, possession of the earth in despite of

winter. The scenery had thus appeared to the highest advantage, and the Lombard plains seemed flat and meaningless to the eyes of Morley Ernstein, as they bent their way towards Verona.

After sleeping in that fine old city, seeing all the curious monuments which it contains, Juliet's apocryphal tomb, and that splendid amphitheatre which first wakes up in the mind of the traveller the images of the mighty past, that Rome is destined to call forth still more vividly, it became a question whether they should proceed on their way southward, while the weather was yet fine and clear, or turn aside to visit Venice, and other places of interest on that side of Italy.

Lieberg seemed somewhat anxious to go on, but Morley had dreams about Venice which he wished to realize. It was to him a place of greater interest than Rome itself. He had few sympathies with the Cæsars, but with

"The Rialto, Shylock, and the Moor,"

he had a thousand, and easily induced his companion to give up his own opinion, and accompany him, by Vicenza and Padua, to the City of the Sea, proposing, as they returned, to pass by Mantua and Modena, on their way to Naples.

Venice is certainly a place of enchantment—the only town I ever saw which leaves fancy far behind. Morley Ernstein yielded to the magic influence of the place, as he had yielded to the effect of every other beautiful thing along the road. The buildings, the pictures, the air, the Adriatic, the moonlight walks in the Piazzetta, the solemn mysterious gloom of the jewel-fretted dome of St. Mark's,—all excited his imagination to a pitch which he had thought scarcely possible; he lived as if in another world; he felt as if his spirit were refreshed and renewed. The powers of enjoyment came fully back upon him, and the vein of melancholy, of unfading and unfaded regret, that mingled with every pleasure, seemed, now, to elevate and not to lower the tone of his sensations.

Such was his state of mind when, one day, as he was waiting for Lieberg on the Sclavonian quay, and gazing thoughtfully over towards the ghost-like church of the *Salute*, a lady crossed him, dressed, as is very common there, in black, and gliding along with a quick but graceful pace, her head bent down, and her veil closely drawn around her face. She had passed him before she seemed to take any notice; but then she suddenly stopped, and turning round, as if

she partially recognised him and wished to make herself sure, she raised her veil, shewing him the countenance of his fair companion Veronica.

Morley sprang forward with real pleasure, for the effect of Lieberg's description of her character and conduct was yet strong upon his mind; but she looked at him reproachfully, though she held out her hand, saying—"You had forgotten your promise. I have heard of your being in Venice these five days."

"I had not forgotten, indeed," replied Morley; "but, if you recollect, you gave me to understand that you would not be here so soon."

"True—true," she said; "but I did not stay in Milan as long as I expected—I wanted to get back; and now I am mortified, because I dare say you have seen almost all that is worth seeing here without me. I wanted to show you everything myself, and to see your enthusiasm, to call it forth, to force it into action. My countrymen, and almost every other nation upon earth, make a mistake about you English; they say you have no enthusiasm, but I believe that England is the only country where true enthusiasm is to be found. The difference is, that with us there is the gilding upon the surface—with you the gold is in the heart. With

most nations it is a painted shrine, having little inside, but with you it is the oaken casket, and the jewels within; now, you have deprived me of the pleasure of seeing these jewels—I mean, making you display your enthusiasm; and therefore I am very angry with you."

"You shall not be angry with me long," said Morley—"for I have not yet seen one-half there is to see, and my enthusiasm is in such a state of excitement, that I could run wild upon almost any subject connected with Venice."

"That is right—that is right," she cried; "and you must let me show you all. Where are you going now? My gondola is at the end of the quay; but who is this coming here, as if to join you? Oh, I remember!—that dark, terrible man, Lieberg; I have seen him in Naples in days of old. I never loved that man: there is something fearful about him. You are travelling with him, I hear. Beware—beware!"

Almost as she spoke, Lieberg came up, bowing low to the fair Italian, but without addressing her, and Morley could evidently see that he was not well pleased to find him in her society.

"I am sorry," he said, addressing his friend —"that I shall not be able to accompany you as I intended, for I find letters at the banker's

this morning, which require an immediate answer."

Veronica's features sparkled with pleasure, which she took not the slightest pains to conceal. "You shall come with me, then," she said, "and we will row across to one of the islands, go to the Armenian convent, or to Murano—No, that is too far—we will go down the grand canal, and see some of the pictures. There are pictures here that make one live three hundred years ago, and speak with people that have been long in their graves."

"A pleasant employment, madam, for a dull morning," said Lieberg.

"Sometimes the dead are as pleasant, and less dangerous companions than the living," answered the lady, in a marked manner.

Lieberg bowed low, with bitter emphasis replying—"Undoubtedly!"

Veronica could not but feel his meaning, and her eyes flashed for a moment angrily; but the next instant the look of irritation passed away, and giving her hand gaily to Morley Ernstein, she said—"Come! your friend is not an Englishman, and therefore we can expect no enthusiasms from him."

In a minute or two after, however, as they

were walking on together, she said, in a low voice—"Has he been slandering me? Has he dared to say aught against my name?"

"No, indeed," answered Morley Ernstein; "nothing of the kind, I assure you. He told me he had seen you at Naples some years ago——"

"But his words implied something," she exclaimed, hastily—"he spoke as if he wished to give you a warning, and evidently alluded to some existing danger. What was it? Tell me, my friend, if you are frank, as I believe you. Did he, or did he not, mean to imply that I was like some of our light women of the theatres, who seek for men, such as you are, to plunder and deceive them?"

"Not in the least," replied Morley; "he thought, on the contrary, that you might captivate but to make me unhappy; in fact, that you might sport with love after having excited it."

"I seek not to excite it," said the lady, in a grave tone; "I never have sought, and I have warned you fully."

"You have," answered Morley, "and I have no fear. My heart is cased in iron, fair lady, as hard as your own, and there is no danger of

my deriving aught but pleasure from your society."

The lady looked up in his face with a gay smile, conscious of grace and powers of captivation, perhaps doubting a little her companion's capabilities of resistance, and half inclined to try them, if but to shake his too great confidence. In short, dear reader—for in truth I must be short—Morley Ernstein and Veronica Pratesi were in as dangerous a situation as ever two people were in this wide world; both of them a good deal too confident of their own powers, and trusting themselves too far in every way.

At the end of the quay was the lady's own gondola, and in it, half sitting, half lying, as is the case in those luxurious contrivances, Morley Ernstein skimmed along over the waves of the lagune during the rest of the day. That in itself was dangerous enough, but the conversation of his fair companion, the sights they met with, the feelings, the thoughts, the enthusiasms which those sights called forth, the excitement of the scene and the circumstances, all rendered even that first day very perilous indeed. Darkness at length fell, and Veronica insisted that Morley should dine with her, and spend the

rest of the day at her house. It was a small but beautiful dwelling, with a delicately carved marble staircase, leading down to one of the principal canals; and as Morley found that he could not leave Lieberg without some explanation, he obtained her permission to return to the inn on the promise of being back with her again immediately. Her gondola conveyed him to Danielli's, and waited for him while he went up and told Lieberg of his engagement.

His companion gazed in his face with a look of some astonishment, and then exclaimed, laughing—"On my life, Morley, either this woman is a coquette, which is a name she never bore, or else she is in love with you."

"Neither, my good friend," replied Morley. "If I did not feel sure that she was neither one nor the other, my conduct would be very different."

"Well, go on Morley—go on," said Lieberg, shaking him by the hand; "if you win Veronica Pratesi, you will indeed be an extraordinary person. But you will not win her; so take care you don't get yourself into a scrape."

To some it may seem that Lieberg was very kind in his apprehensions for his young friend, but with others it will be doubted whether his

warnings were likely to deter him from, or lead him on upon the path which he was pursuing. We will not take the pains of solving the problem, but will only tell what was the real effect which his words did produce. They instantly suggested to Morley's mind the question—"Is it possible to win Veronica?—to call that fascinating creature my own—to accomplish that in which so many had failed?" There were three distinct sources of temptation in those three ways of putting the question. Passion, fancy, vanity—all raised their sweet voices together; and although Morley, like Ulysses, tried to stop his ears against the song of the Sirens—or, in other words, turned away his mind from the idea—yet, throughout the whole of his after-communication with Veronica, that question came like a vague sound, heard, though he would not listen to it—"Is it possible to win her?"

The devil never miscalculates in his dealings with human nature, and in choosing his word, he always selects the right one for his own purposes.

He found Veronica alone, standing in one of those beautiful halls which have seen the fair and the bright of other days, and seem in their

very atmosphere to bear the memories of more poetical times, even in the steam and rail-road age in which we live. She was arranging flowers in a large antique vase, and the classic lines of her beautiful figure accorded well with every object that the room contained, while an air of intense thought, all too deep for the light employment in which she was engaged, harmonized the whole — like the low tones of some fine instrument in the bass, pervading with its solemn sounds a fine and complicated piece of music.

Veronica looked up from the flowers as Morley entered, but seemed scarcely to see him for a moment or two, so intense was the fit of musing into which she was plunged. Then, with a graceful wave of the head, and a smile at her own abstractedness, she gave him her hand, saying—"You have been long; and, as I always do when left alone, I had fallen into a reverie."

"A sweet or a bitter one?" demanded Morley.

"Mixed," she replied, "as all things on earth are. But come, dinner will be ready in a few minutes, and in the meanwhile I will sing you a song, which has never been heard by any ears but yours. It is by a young composer,

named Bellini, who will one day be a great man."

The reader may imagine how the evening passed—music, and poetry, and deep thought, and bright fancies,—Wit, and Imagination, and Feeling, sporting like three sweet children on the carpet, while the good old nurses, Judgment and Prudence, were kept at the back of the door. Twice a fit of musing fell upon Veronica. Was the cause of it fear? Did she doubt herself? Did she doubt her companion? Who shall say? One thing is certain—she and Morley Ernstein were equally resolved not to fear anything, which is, in general, a strong sign of being afraid. It was late when they parted, and both started when they found how late, for the minutes had gone so rapidly that each thought the night was not far spent. They only left each other to meet again the following morning early, Veronica exacting a promise that Morley would see nothing more in Venice without her.

"I cannot refuse your friend's company," she said, "if it needs must be so; but I shall never like him, even if he were to call me an angel."

Lieberg, however, refused to be of the party, saying, with a sneer—"The housemaids in

England, Morley, have a proverb which sets forth the inconveniences attending upon the number, three; at least, in reference to social things. Now, what is good for a housemaid is good for a king or a count, and therefore I will not render your party of the obnoxious number. So fare you well, and success attend you, though I am quite willing to take you a bet of five thousand pounds this moment that you do not succeed."

"I shall succeed in all I seek for," replied Morley, "for I shall seek for nothing that is not very easily obtained."

Once more the gondola skimmed along the canals, and once more Morley and Veronica, side by side, were borne over the bright Adriatic waters, throughout a world of beautiful things, and indulging their fancies to the utmost. Veronica told Mofley again all that she had told him before about the coldness of her nature, and the impossibility of her ever loving any one; and Morley laughed, and assured her that the warning was unnecessary; and then they both smiled and continued the subject of love, till, landing at a palace on the Grand Canal, they walked thoughtfully into the vacant rooms hung with pictures beautiful and inestimable in them-

selves, but falling into sad decay. The first thing that their eyes rested upon was a small but exquisite painting of the marriage of St. Catherine, by Paul Veronese, and before it they paused for several minutes without uttering a word.

"It is strange," said Veronica, at length, "that such things should exist."

"As love, do you mean?" demanded Morley, with some surprise.

"No, no, no," replied his fair companion, with playful vehemence; "I can easily conceive love, though I never felt it, and can conceive its leading one to anything, to excess of every kind, jealousy, revenge, sacrifices of all kinds—everything, in short, but marriage. Why any man, because he is attached to a woman, should wish her to make herself a slave, I cannot understand; but still less, how any woman can consent to such a folly. She would love him ten times better if she were not bound by a hard oath; and he would not so soon cease to love her, as men usually do, if he did not first make her a slave."

Morley did not reply, but went on musing, and Veronica once more brought back the con-

versation to the subject of love, uttered a few gay and saucy sentences in defiance of the great power, and then fell into a more pensive train, ending in a fresh reverie.

Thus passed the day; and when they once more reached the steps of her own house, she said—"I will not ask you to stay with me to-day, for I must go to the theatre. You may come and see me there if you like. You will not often have the opportunity, for I have to-day taken a resolution to give up the stage for ever. I require it no longer as a resource, and my feelings are changed towards that profession in which I once found triumph and delight. I used to imagine that there is something glorious in embodying a great writer's conceptions, or in giving voice to the melodious visions of some great composer; but now, I know not why, I feel sick of it altogether, so I shall only sing the five nights for which I am engaged, and once more for the poor of the city. Come and hear me then! But do not applaud. I would not for one half of Europe see you clap your hands with the vulgar crowd; I should not be able to sing a note afterwards."

Had Morley Ernstein been experienced in

love, he would have known the invariable maxim that the moment a woman separates one particular man from the rest of the world in her feelings towards him—whatever seeming those feelings may put on—the gates of the heart are thrown open for love to ride in triumphant.

Morley was not experienced, however; he went to the theatre, and he saw Veronica in one of those tragic operas where song gives intenser voice to passion. He obeyed her instructions to the letter, for the deep and breathless interest that he took in the scene, the thrilling delight that the full, rich, exquisite tones of her voice produced, left no room for that critical approbation from which springs applause. He was near enough for her to see him as well as he saw her, and for a moment, when their eyes first met, her voice sank and wavered; but then it burst forth again with power only increased, and the rapturous plaudits of all who were there present, showed that she had that night excelled all which she had ever done before.

Morley waited for her coming out, and offered her his hand to lead her to her boat. She seemed pale and fatigued; he uttered not

a word of praise or admiration, but led her on almost in silence.

"You must not come to-night," she said; "I am tired and exhausted, so I will go to bed and sleep. Come early to-morrow; we will see sights all day, and in the evening I will have some people to meet you at dinner whom you will like to see. Canova is here, and——"

"Pray do not have any one," said Morley, "unless you yourself wish it. I would rather spend the evening as we spent the last."

She looked in his face by the moonlight for a moment as they stood by the edge of the canal, and then answered, in a voice tremulous and almost mournful, "It shall be as you like."

What will you have, reader? Two, three, four, five days passed away, and passed in the same manner. Veronica became pale and thoughtful, Morley Ernstein agitated and apprehensive.

Lieberg no longer sneered, but sometimes looked in Morley's face, and once laid his hand on his arm, saying—"In my course through life, Morley, I have seen more men render themselves miserable by throwing away happiness that was offered to them, because their vanity was engaged in the pursuit of that which they

never could obtain, than by any other means. Morley, you know your own business best; but, I beseech you, let no such vanity affect you, for happiness is never offered to a man twice in life."

Morley made no reply, but gazed steadfastly forth upon the blue waters before him.

CHAPTER XIII.

Oh, how often in life, when struggling with temptation, in the darkness of error and of wrong!—oh, how often would we give the best jewel we possess, for one ray of light to guide us back to the bright path that we have forsaken. That light, indeed, is always to be found, till life itself is at an end, though with more difficulty at every step that we take onward in the darkness; for the hand of a beneficent God has planted beacons all across the stormy sea of life, to guide us into port, if we would look for them. But besides these—these steadfast lights, which mark out the right track, and should keep us ever from deviating—there are a thousand circumstances arising, apparently, by the merest accident, which cross

our course, like wandering boats, to hail us as they sail, and tell us we have gone astray. It is for some of these that we long when we first find ourselves chartless, amidst the waves of error. We look not for the beacons that guide us back, but too often gaze afar for some distant sail to follow her in hope of help and guidance.

Morley Ernstein leaned his head upon his hand on the morning after his conversation with Lieberg, and, with his brain all in confusion, his heart full of contention, he would have given all he possessed for any little accident which would have forced him away from Venice. He was ashamed of his own irresolution—he felt that he was hurrying on to the destruction of a life of hopes—he felt that he could never love but one —that his love for her—his pure, high, holy love —even in agony and disappointment, was better, far better, than the fiery cup of mere passion; and that though he might know delirious joys and feverish happiness with another, yet the sorrowful memory of Juliet Carr was worth a world of such enjoyments. But he was fascinated, the magic spell was over him—like the glamour, which the Scotch, of old, attributed to the gipsies, —compelling him to follow wheresoever the charmer would. Poor Morley, however, had

not to contend against his own passions only, there were obstacles thrown in his way by others; and though on that very morning he took the same resolution which he had followed in Paris, to quit the place at once, yet he was prevented from acting upon it.

"Lieberg," he said, going down to the saloon, where breakfast waited him, "you will think me eccentric and capricious; but I much wish to leave Venice to-day."

"Nay," said Lieberg, in reply, "that is scarcely possible, for me, at least; and I think, Morley, you will not, a second time, deal so brusquely with me as you did in the French capital. Wait for me, only till the day after to-morrow; and then, however wrong I may think you, I will accompany you at once."

"Why do you think me wrong?" demanded Morley, sharply.

"If I must speak the plain truth, Morley," answered Lieberg, "I think you wrong, because I know all that has happened to you. I am aware that you have been trifled with, deceived, made a sport of, by one who was not worthy of you, and whose conduct you will one day see in its proper light; and I am sure, also, that you have now within your grasp a treasure which would

make you the envy of one half of Europe, and that you will not take it, out of weak regard for a woman who has sported with you in the most cruel manner. I say you are wrong, Morley, in point of justice to yourself, and equally so to Veronica, for she is not one to exact from you any ties but those of love; and it would be less painful far to part at an after-period, if you find that you cannot be happy together, than to leave her now, when you have taught her to fancy you everything that she has dreamt of as forming the being for whom she could regard the whole of the rest of the world with coldness. But you would be happy! She is too enthusiastic and devoted ever to lose that dream; and you would find in her that love which alone can give you full felicity, and that endless variety which would keep up the charm to the last hour of life. However, to-day you cannot go, for you forget you left your carriage at Mestre, with a broken spring, and it cannot be repaired before to-morrow."

Strange, that a broken spring should have an effect which no argument could have! Morley had hardened himself against Lieberg's persuasions; but the broken spring gave him an excuse for staying, which was valid to himself;

and though it could hold good but for one day, that was all Lieberg wanted. It was enough to let his words have their effect in silence.

"That is unfortunate!" replied Morley; and, retiring to his own chamber, he sent the courier to have the carriage repaired at once; but in the meanwhile he thought of all that Lieberg had said, and dressed himself hastily, to go to the house of Veronica.

There was one point rested on his mind, more than all the rest of Lieberg's persuasions. He had alluded to the conduct of Juliet Carr, almost in the same terms which had been used by Harry Martin. The latter, indeed, had never mentioned Juliet's name; but an eager and impetuous character, like that of Morley Ernstein, always applies what others say vaguely, to the subject most interesting to itself at the time.

On this point, then, he paused, and pondered with exactly the same train of thought which Lieberg could have desired, asking himself—"Is it, then, true? Is it, then, self-evident to everybody but myself, that my feelings have been sported with, my heart trampled upon, my love despised, and rejected without reason, without cause? And shall I cast away my chance of happiness with another, on the

account of one who so treats me? But then, again, came the question—had he that chance of happiness with another? Did that fascinating being really love him? Was he not deceiving himself, in reading all that was strange and peculiar in her manner as marks of a growing feeling new to her heart?

With confusion of mind and thought hardly describable, Morley buried his eyes in his hands, as if to let the troubled current of ideas work itself clear. But it was in vain he did so, and, finishing his toilette hastily, he snatched up his hat, and issued forth. In a few minutes the gondola glided up to the steps of Veronica's house, the door opened to admit him, the servant did not even go on to announce him. All spoke as plainly as signs can speak, that he was regarded in that dwelling as no other person was regarded; that he was one and alone in the favour of its mistress, and that her feelings spread themselves around to her dependents.

He went on up the stairs, then, with a quick step, and a beating heart; but as he did so, in passing the window of an ante-room, that overhung one of the canals, there was the gliding rush of a gondola through the water below, and voices speaking as the boat was pushed along.

It was Italian they were talking; but one sweet voice was very like that of Juliet Carr, and Morley paused, and trembled. Reader, though he was fascinated and attracted, though admiration and regard—ay, and passion, had each its share, Morley Ernstein did not love Veronica—he could think of another at a moment like that, and he did not love Veronica!

He heard her move in the next chamber, however, and went on. She was paler than usual, but her paleness was not a defect, but rather the contrary. She looked beautiful, though she was not beautiful, and her dark resplendent eyes were full of soul and life; while over the whole of the rest of her face, and of her exquisite figure, there was an air of languor that contrasted strangely, but finely, with the light and fire of those dark orbs.

"You have been long this morning," she said, in a voice, every tone of which was music. "Why have you come so late?—You are agitated, too!" and she gazed in his face for a moment, while similar and still greater agitation took possession of her whole frame. Her eyes gradually sank to the ground, her cheek became crimson, her hand trembled in his, her whole form shook in every limb. Morley felt that she

was sinking, and catching her in his arms, he supported her to the sofa, at the other side of the room.

"Veronica!" he said—"Veronica! what is this?"

"Ask me not—ask me not!" she replied, putting away his hand, and covering her own eyes. "Ask me nothing, Morley. Tear not away the veil from my own sight. Make me not own that I have deceived you—that I have deceived myself. Oh! leave me, leave me, and forget me!"

Morley tried to soothe her, but it was in vain; Veronica burst into a passion of tears, and though she left her hand in his, when he took it she answered him not.

Thus it continued for some time; Morley remained more than an hour with her, and it were useless to attempt to describe all that took place, impossible to detail all that was said. Neither of them knew what they had uttered when they parted, but the method of their parting was somewhat strange. Veronica had become calmer, she had even given to Morley Ernstein the first caress of affection that her lips had ever bestowed upon mortal man. But whether it was that remorse and regret even then, like a

serpent only half hidden by the roses, suffered itself, in some vague and shadowy manner, to appear in word, or look, or action, I cannot tell; Veronica suddenly started away, and clasped her hands together, exclaiming—"I thought you long, but you are come too soon; I thought you were here seldom, but you have been here too often! Oh, Morley, Morley! leave me now, I beseech you. Leave me to thought, leave me to reflection! I will write to you—I will send to you. Fear not!" she continued, seeing a look of pain come over his countenance; "I will never make you unhappy; but I would only have time for thought —I would only act calmly—it shall be at your own choice. Everything shall be at your will; but if you come to me again, you come for ever—Leave, leave me, now;—if I say more, I shall die."

Morley left her, and strange and great was the agitation in his heart, as he cast himself again into the gondola, and the boat rowed away.

It was gliding rapidly up the great canal, when suddenly it passed one of those large boats used by the Venetian government to carry strangers to and from Venice, in commu-

nication with the post-houses of Mestre and Fusina. It was filled with people, and rowed by several men. There were English liveries, and English faces in it, and in the principal part appeared a group, which, at any other time, would have attracted Morley's attention instantly. As it was, it was only when the boat was shooting fast past his own, that the countenance of Juliet Carr burst upon his sight, and was gone again in a moment.

"Stop, stop!" he cried to his own boatman. "Where is that boat going? Follow it quick!"

"It is going to Mestre, sir," replied the man. "We can never catch it. They are going to join the post-horses, and will be gone before we arrive."

"Ten sequins, if you come up in time!" said Morley; and away the boat flew over the waters, like a bird.

The moment seemed dreadfully long; but what is there that gold will not do? Mestre was at length in sight, Morley's foot was upon the shore, and, darting at once to the inn—which so many readers will recollect as a mere hotel for empty carriages—he gazed round for the party, which must have arrived only a few minutes before him. There were two chariots

standing before the door, with horses attached to them, ready for departure, and servants lingering round, as if all were concluded in the way of packing, and nothing remained but for their masters to appear, ere the vehicles rolled away. Before Morley could enter the inn, there were voices on the stairs, and the face of Juliet Carr herself appeared, with several others, in the door-way. It was as beautiful as ever, but somewhat pale, and there was a listless sadness in the expression, which spoke to Morley's heart, and told him that the spirit within could find no satisfaction in sporting with the feelings of him who loved her. Morley strove to be calm, to collect his thoughts, to tranquillize his demeanour; but every one must know how vain are such efforts at such a moment.

He advanced straight towards her, however, and took her hand, while the first expression that passed over her countenance was that of pleasure, succeeded suddenly by that painful shadow which their mutual situation naturally produced.

"I *must* speak with you, for a few minutes, Juliet," he said, heeding nobody, seeing nobody but her. "You must not refuse me; for there is much at stake."

"I will not," replied Juliet, in a low and agitated tone; "I will never refuse you that which you have every right to ask, and I know you will never ask anything but what is right. Wait one moment. Let me speak a word to Lord Clavering, and I will be back."

She took a step or two forward, to the group of persons, who had apparently gone on in order not to interrupt a conversation which all must have seen was one of no slight interest; and for about a minute Morley remained, gazing down upon the ground, with thoughts and feelings agitated almost to madness. He now learned, with agony, how different is love and passion, as his heart was torn between the ties that chained him to Veronica, and the higher attachment that bound him to Juliet Carr. He might have stood there for an hour, swallowed up in his own sensations, had not Juliet returned, saying, in a low and tender voice—"Now, Morley—now!"

She led the way, and he followed, to the saloon upon the first floor, where her party had been waiting till the carriages were ready, and there she paused, supporting herself with her hand upon one of the tables, and gazing with her tender, speaking eyes, upon Morley's face,

with a look almost approaching to apprehension.

"Juliet!" he said, after a moment's hesitation—"Juliet! you owe me some explanation. Let me know whether you are sporting with a heart that loves you, for your own gratification, or at the dictates of others?"

"Oh, Morley!" she exclaimed, her eyes filling with tears, "do I hear such words from you? Are you not sure—do you not see, that I am as wretched as you can be?"

"Then why, Juliet—why?" he demanded; "what is the obstacle? What is the motive that should make you not only cast away your happiness, but mine—mine, which was trusted entirely to your keeping, with the most boundless confidence? If you can assign no motive, I claim you as my own, by every tie, by every right ——"

"Nay, nay," she said—"not so, Morley! I conceal not that I love you deeply, truly; but it must be told—I am bound, Morley, by an oath, I am bound, by a promise which I cannot, which I dare not break, and must fulfil to the letter, though it condemns me to sorrow and despair through life!"

"Juliet," replied her lover, in a tone now

calm, but calm with despair—"I one time fancied that you would be my guardian angel; that you would form my blessing; that you would be the light of my home, the guide of my footsteps; would cure me of all that was weak or wrong in my nature; would prove at once my safeguard and my happiness. How have I deceived myself! You have taken from me peace; you have deprived me of hope; you leave me without object or expectation in life; you withdraw from me all motive for virtue; you plunge me into degradation and vice!"

Juliet had turned very pale, and trembled as Morley spoke; but as he went on to tell her too truly the state of mind to which he was reduced, and the peril in which he stood, agitation overcame all habits; she sank upon her knees before him, and clasped his hand eagerly.

"Oh, no!" she cried; "No, no!—I am very, very miserable! Morley, save me from that despair—save me from the dreadful thought that I have debased as fine a spirit as ever God sent for trial on this earth. Morley — dear Morley, believe that I am not in fault; and oh, in pity, if ever you loved Juliet Carr, yield not to evil, but conquer it, as we are told to do,

with good!—Have compassion upon me, Morley, and do not, in addition to all the wretchedness that has fallen upon my head—in addition to the bitter, the everlasting disappointment of my first and only affection—do not give me the undying agony of thinking that he whom I have ever loved has cast away his fair name, and blasted his heart and spirit with evil, on account of this our sorrow. Promise me, Morley—promise me, at least, to try—promise to resist to the utmost. Nay, nay, I will kneel here till you do promise; I will kneel—I will die, Morley, at your feet, sooner than that you should leave me with such thoughts and purposes as you but now entertained. Will you—will you promise me? When this poor heart is broken, you will then believe and understand all that I feel—nay, strive not to raise me, unless you give me that promise."

"Well, Juliet—well, I do," said Morley Ernstein; "but you know not how I am beset."

"Oh, if you would but forget me," replied Juliet, "happiness might yet be yours;—every happiness that you have dreamt of with me might be yours with another. I know it, Morley—I am sure of it; and Juliet Carr

would bless the woman who, as the wife of Morley Ernstein, would fulfil that vision of peace, and goodness, and delight, in which she herself must not share. Oh, that I might say all I know and all I think!—but I must not. Yet the time will, I trust, come ere long, when your own eyes will be opened to qualities far superior to any that I possess, and that you will at length find peace and affection with one upon whom there is no restraint, who can and will, perhaps *does* love you, even now."

Morley shook his head sadly, but without reply. After a moment's pause, there was a voice calling from below for Juliet.

"Do not go!" he exclaimed, catching her hand—"do not go!"

But she withdrew herself gently from him, saying—"I have your promise! Oh, forget not that you have given your promise!" and with those words she left him.

In about an hour, Morley Ernstein came down slowly to the court-yard of the inn; but during the interval he had hardly heard one of all the many sounds in that abode of noise, or seen any object but the forms of his own imagination, though several persons had come in and out of the room while he was there. His face, when he

descended was pale and stern, but there was no longer that absent air about him with which he had remained standing so long in the midst of the saloon above. He looked round the court as he came down the stairs, and amongst the first persons on whom his eye rested, was his own courier, and his old servant, Adam Gray; the one examining his carriage with a blacksmith, the other gazing up towards the windows of the inn, with a face anxious and sorrowful. After speaking a few words, and giving some directions to both, Morley re-entered his boat, and was rowed slowly back to Venice. A slight wind curled the waters of the lagune, and the undulating motion of the boat seemed to soothe him, and to tranquillize thoughts that were in themselves but too turbulent.

But his brief conversation with Juliet Carr had produced the effect it always had upon his mind. There was a magic in the soft melody of her voice, in the pure, spirit-like light of her eyes, in the grace that pervaded her every gesture, which his heart could never resist; and there was still greater power over him, in that tone of high truth and deep sincerity which was felt in all her words and looks. He might think others beautiful when she was

not near; but their beauty faded away like stars before the sun, as soon as he saw her. He might doubt others; but when he heard her speak, he could as soon have doubted truth itself as Juliet Carr.

As soon as the first terrible agitation was over, although he felt more strongly than ever that the flower of happiness was utterly blighted, that, root and branch, it was withered away, yet her presence and her words had awakened the higher and the holier spirit in his heart once more, even in the midst of sorrow and despair. The passions of earth lost their light and their importance in his eyes; mere material things, and the joys that they bring with them, became at once to his sight the ephemera that they really are, and principles and feelings assumed their place, as the only imperishable possessions of man. It was as if, for a brief space, he had passed the grave, and had been enabled to see and judge all that this world contains, as, perhaps, we may see and judge it hereafter.

Dark and sad had indeed become his sensations, but the purpose of right was strong within him, and he now turned his mind to consider what he ought to do, how he ought to act. He had a duty to Veronica to perform as well as to

himself, and steadfastly he resolved to execute it. It is true that she had aided to deceive him, as to what her own feelings might be, and that he also had deceived himself; but he could not wholly exculpate himself of all that had ensued. He had gone on after he felt the danger to himself and her; he had proceeded when he knew that it was wrong to proceed, and he prepared to bear the consequences, whatever those consequences might be, provided they implied no guilt or dishonour. It took him long to think of all these matters, reader; but as the boat slowly wended its way back to Danielli's, he had time for thought; and when he entered the door of the inn, his mind was fully made up as to his future conduct. He would be true and honest; he would deal with Veronica without a concealment, without reserve; he would tell her all, and leave her to decide his fate and her own. Already, he thought, that fate might be sealed; she had promised to write to him, and the letter might be now waiting which would determine all. On enquiry, he found that such was not the case, and he at once sat down to take that step on which his future destiny hung.

CHAPTER XIV.

MORLEY ERNSTEIN TO VERONICA PRATESI.

" You promised to write to me, and you have not done it. Had you written, ere this time, your fate and mine would have been decided for life. But you have hesitated, and it is evident that there is a struggle in your mind as well as in my own. I therefore take the task upon myself of opening to you my heart's inmost feelings, and shewing you what must be the future, as far as my eyes can discover it. We have both, I fear, Veronica, deceived ourselves, and unconsciously may have deceived each other. You were confident in the impunity which you have hitherto enjoyed, and thought that love could never assail you. I felt equally secure in the memory of a deep and permanent,

though disappointed passion, and believed that I could never be sufficiently attracted towards any woman, to seek or to win her affection. You thought I was sufficiently warned by the words you have more than once spoken, and I believed you to be steeled against love, or incapable of feeling. Let us first forgive each other for having mutually deceived one another, and then let me offer you all that I have to offer, and ask if it can make you happy. I have heard you speak rash words in regard to marriage, but I will believe that they were spoken more in sport than earnest, and put them aside altogether, for you must be mine by ties we can both respect, or not at all. I offer you, then, my hand and my name; I offer you the tenderest affection; and I promise you that, as my wife, you shall never have to call yourself "a slave." But at the same time, dear Veronica, I cannot but tell you that the first freshness of my heart has been given to another—that I have loved as man only loves once. I leave it to you to decide whether you can be satisfied with less. Every devotion, every tenderness, every affection, shall be yours, that it is possible for my heart to feel; but still I have loved deeply, passionately, entirely, and though the

dream is gone for ever, its memory will always endure. It is for your voice to pronounce upon our fate. If you do not like to write at length, tell me to come to you, and I will conceive your answer given. At all events, trust to me as a man of honour, that if you become my wife, my whole days thenceforward shall be devoted to forget all others, and make you happy.

"MORLEY ERNSTEIN."

He sealed the letter and sent it; and then, burying his face in his hands, remained for some time in deep and anxious thought. Hour after hour passed, and there was no answer, till, as night drew nigh, he became apprehensive, and went to the well-known dwelling where he had spent so many hours of excitement and temptation. The door no longer opened as if to a master; and the servant, in answer to his questions, said that his mistress was unwell. Morley sent in his name, but Veronica's answer was, that she would write to him. It was not till the following morning that the letter arrived.

FROM VERONICA PRATESI TO MORLEY ERNSTEIN.

"No man ever understands a woman's heart. It never has been, and never will be. The

language written in that book is unknown to you all, and you attempt to read it in vain. I did not write to you, my friend—not because there was any struggle in my bosom, for the struggle was over—but I was impeded by feelings you cannot comprehend, for man can never understand what it is to woman to own that she loves for the first time. Such was the task before me if I had written before your letter reached me, and it seemed then a terrible one, when I fancied that a life of joy and happiness was to follow. Such is the task before me still, even now that I know all your feelings, and see the wide extent of misery into which I have plunged. And yet, strange to say, it is less difficult to confess that I do love, when, coupled with that acknowledgment, I have to bid you quit me for ever.

"When your letter first reached me, Morley, disappointment and agony of mind made me unjust. I was angry with you who have in no way offended, rather than with myself on whom the whole blame must justly rest. I called your words cold, unfeeling, base. But I soon recollected what might have been the result if you had really been base and unfeeling—if, instead of offering me your hand while you nobly confessed the state of your heart, you had taken

advantage of my passions and my prejudices, made me the paramour of a few months or years, and then cast me away like a worn garment. My mind soon did you justice, and owned that you were generous, true, sincere—all that it is proud to love, and agony to part with. But, Morley, then came the greatest temptation of all. Weak, weak woman that I am! A voice within me whispered — Accept his offer, use every means of pleasing, put forth every effort, twine yourself round his heart with every binding tie, make yourself necessary to the joy of every hour — become a wife — Oh, Heaven! perhaps become a mother!—and honour, and virtue, and gratitude, will all combine to win for you that love which is now necessary to your existence! Oh, Morley, what a terrible temptation was there! How vanity flattered, and passion persuaded, and selfishness deceived; but I conquered at length. I love you—and yet will never see you more. Never, unless—Yes, there is yet one hope left me!—I cannot, I will not share one thought of your heart, one remembrance, with any woman, on the face of earth; but with the dead I am not so miserly. If the grave have closed over this affection—if your memoried love be with some saint in

heaven, come to me—come to me, dear Morley! I will soothe, I will comfort, I will console you! We will weep together over the tomb of her who is gone; and when I strive to cheer each hour of your existence, I will think of her and redouble every effort. But if the air of this earth be still breathed by her who has taken your love from me, adieu, for ever!

"VERONICA."

MORLEY ERNSTEIN TO VERONICA PRATESI.

"Alas, Veronica, that I should add pain to pain! Had my heart been with the dead I would have told you so at once. But still I must not deceive you; it is not so. She whom I have so deeply loved still lives, and her own will is the only barrier between us. Such is the plain truth.

"MORLEY ERNSTEIN."

Morley was not kept long in the faint suspense that still remained after he had written the last sentences. Ere half an hour was over, a note was brought him containing those few sad words, "Adieu, for ever!"

In two hours more, he and Lieberg were once more rolling on upon their way towards Bologna,

Morley bearing with him some regret and much grief; but so far happy that he could lay his hand upon his heart, and say—"Though I may have erred in the commencement of this sad affair, in the end I have done right."

CHAPTER XV.

If Angerona, the secret divinity said to have presided over the fate of ancient Rome, could hear the many barbarous and unromantic names of inns, the Isles Britanniques, the Hotel de l'Europe, the Ville de Paris, &c., which are daily vociferated in the ancient capital of empires, doubtless her ears would be more offended than, we are told, they were formerly, on any one pronouncing her own harmonious title. It was to the principal hospitium, however, in the Piazza di Spagna, that the carriages of Count Lieberg and Sir Morley Ernstein took their way in the middle of one of those winter months when Rome is fullest. The streets were crowded with vehicles of all kinds, as the travelling companions passed along; and so many fair English

faces were to be seen in every direction, that it was difficult for them not to believe themselves in that part of Bond Street where, at about four o'clock of the day, during five months of the year, there seems to be an inextricable impediment to the advance or retreat of any sort of carriage whatsoever.

The first order to their respective couriers, given both by Morley Ernstein and Lieberg after they had taken seizin of their apartments, was to proceed to the post-office and enquire for their letters. Lieberg, indeed, seemed the most anxious, and it is to be remarked, that he had kept up with England a much more constant and regular correspondence than his friend.

During the couriers' absence, however, the two comrades occupied themselves in different ways, according to their several characters and habits. Lieberg, with that regular attention to his own comfort which never deserted him, proceeded to arrange the rooms, of which he took possession, with scrupulous care of their neatness, grace, and convenience. His books were assigned to their particular station; trinkets and ornaments took their place upon one table; implements for writing and drawing were laid upon another; a few small miniature pictures

of faces pleasant to the eye were displayed where they could be seen in the best light, and, in short, in half an hour the room looked as different as possible from that which it was when he entered it, and represented as nearly as can be conceived the interior of his lodging in Sackville Street.

Morley Ernstein, on the contrary, walked up and down the saloon, which was common to both their apartments, with eyes fixed upon the ground, and a sad and pensive brow. He was arranging the chamber of his own breast while Lieberg was busy with the contents of his carriage, and the agitation of all his feelings was too great to admit of his attending to other things.

It may be asked, then, if Lieberg—whose passions I have represented as intense and strong, and whose keen and active mind was always in movement—if he had no thoughts to occupy him as well as his companion. Yes, reader, he had; and busy were those thoughts all the time, but their activity interrupted nothing else, for there were no contending emotions in his breast—there was no struggle there between good and evil—no regret for aught that had passed—no hesitation in regard to what was to

come. It is only when feeling rises up to war with feeling, when principles combat passions, and when, from the great battle-field of the present, our fugitive thoughts fly from both hosts of good and evil into the wide surrounding country of the past and the future, and struggle as they run—it is only then, I say, that, taken up entirely with the strife within, man can attend but little to the idle things without.

What were Morley's sensations the reader may well divine. It is true, no new event of any importance had occurred to grieve or agitate him; but every one must have felt, when any abiding sorrow is at the heart, how a fresh scene will sometimes rouse it, as if from sleep, and with it all its host of painful memories.

In about half an hour the courier returned with the letters. There were several to each of the gentlemen; but the two or three first that each of them opened, seemed to excite very little interest, for they were read carelessly, in one instance, eliciting a passing smile, in another, a momentary look of thought, and then cast aside. At length, however, Lieberg came to one which brought a dark look of triumph upon his handsome features; and after reading it twice, he folded it carefully up and put it by,

turning his bright dark eyes slowly to the countenance of Morley, who now stood in one of the windows, perusing with anxious attention a long letter of several sheets. The young Englishman's brow was contracted, his lip was curled, his eye straining on the paper. When he had read one sheet he re-read it, and then glanced more rapidly over the second and third which seemed to be written in another hand.

But we must turn to the first sheet, and give the reader some account of its contents. It was addressed to Morley by his guardian, Mr. Hamilton, and conveyed some of the most unpleasant tidings that could meet his eye, as far as his pecuniary affairs were concerned.

"My dear Morley (the letter said), I am distressed not to know exactly where to find you, as I have to write to you on business of a very urgent nature. I shall, however, address this letter to Rome, trusting that you may receive it ere long. A fortnight ago I received what I then considered a very extraordinary application from a solicitor, informing me that a bill in chancery was about to be filed against you immediately, for the recovery of the estate of Warmstone Castle, your title to which he

maintained to be bad. At first I felt inclined to treat the affair with contempt, but upon this legal gentleman calling upon me again, I saw him, and found that several eminent lawyers had been engaged in the affair, and consequently that it was more serious than I at first imagined. At the same time there was a degree of fairness about the tone of the opposite party, which induced me to meet them in the same manner, and I have had two interviews with all the parties, in which I find they ground their claim upon the following assertions. You are aware, I dare say, that your father became possessed of Warmstone by purchase from a Mr. Barham. The sum given was ninety-three thousand pounds, and the title at the time seemed perfectly good. A will, however, and deed of settlement is now produced, showing that this Mr. Barham did not succeed to the estate as his father's direct heir, but under this will and settlement, by which the estate was strictly tied up. The father left but one son, indeed, the person who sold the estate to your father, but that son at the time the will was signed was married and had a child, and the will strictly limits the estate to that child and his children, appointing in a diffuse manner

certain contingent provisions for younger children, with which we have nothing to do. The youth who now claims the property is the grandson of the person who sold the estate to your father, and the papers necessary to prove his claim were discovered, I hear, by a Mr. Carr, with whom I well remember your father once had a severe dispute concerning what he believed to be a very nefarious transaction, in which poor Lady Malcolm suffered severely. Thus, as the character of the finder of this document is undoubtedly very bad, and the young man himself not the most prepossessing person in the world, I naturally concluded that the will might be manufactured. The parties gave me every opportunity of examining the document with my own lawyer and yours; and your friend, Mr. Wills, whose eyes you know are very sharp where your interests are concerned, remembered that there is an old clerk still living who belonged to the house, the name of which is upon one of the documents. This clerk, after some difficulty, was discovered, and, I am sorry to say, he remembers distinctly having seen the will itself, when it was submitted on some legal point to the house with which he served his time. I have at once

caused the whole case to be laid before the highest legal authorities, and send you their opinion. You will see that they believe you could keep the claimants out of the estate for years, but must yield at last, as the case is quite clear. It is for you to decide; but I think I know how you will act. The worst part of the whole, however, is still to be told: the estate has been in possession of your family for thirty years, and though the fault lies not with you or yours, but in the fraudulent conduct of the man who sold it, you are held to be responsible for all the rents which have been received, and which now amount to more than a hundred and fifty thousand pounds. You could recover the ninety-three thousand pounds with interest, if the man who sold the estate had left any assets; but the present claimant comes in as heir of entail, and his grandfather, who illegally sold the estate, died in poverty Perhaps a composition may be entered into in regard to these back rents, and, at all events, we must obtain time for the payment, as, I believe, that after the purchase of the small estate in Sussex, there remained no more of the guardianship account than fifty thousand pounds, and it would take ten years of the whole rents of the

Morley Court property to clear off the sum still unpaid. Unauthorized by you, I have of course not been able to act; but I beg of you to write to me at once, giving me your own views."

The banker went on to consider the subject in various ways, but the terrible fact remained, that one estate was virtually gone, another deeply encumbered, and that all the long and careful savings of his minority were to be swept away at once.

What was the effect upon Morley Ernstein? Very different from that which might be supposed. The first blow was undoubtedly startling; he looked round like one bewildered; re-read what Mr. Hamilton had written; and then turning to the legal opinions inclosed, perused them accurately. They confirmed but too fully the account which his banker had given, and Morley Ernstein made up his mind in an instant. After the first stunning effect of the intelligence was over, it seemed to give him strength and energy; and merely telling Lieberg that he must instantly answer the letter he had received, he quitted the room, sent for his writing-desk, and applied himself busily, and with a steadfast mind, to put down, in a

letter to Mr. Hamilton, the resolutions which he had immediately taken.

"My dear Mr. Hamilton," he said, "I will never defend an untenable cause. The present case is one in which it is very difficult, if not impossible, for the law to deal justly with both parties, and proves the utter absurdity of the axiom, which we hear so continually repeated by lawyers, that according to English law there is no wrong without a remedy. A notorious and shameful fraud was evidently committed in the sale of the Warmstone estate to my father, and in the concealment of the entail. The law has now only to judge which must suffer—myself, or the persons on whom it was entailed. Perhaps it is right that I should be the victim; but, at all events, a wrong is done and suffered somewhere. You have my full authority to concede the whole question, to give up Warmstone to the rightful owners, and to make the best arrangement that you can for paying the back rents with as little inconvenience as possible. All that I have in the funds must be immediately sold out for that purpose; but you say that there will still remain about a hundred thousand pounds to be paid. Morley Court I will part with on no account—not an acre of

it; and the other little estate in Sussex, if sold, would still be but a drop of water in the ocean. What I propose, then, is this: immediately to cut off every superfluous expense, and to live as so many do, comfortably and happily upon the rents of the Sussex estate—seven hundred and thirty pounds per annum, I think we made it. This is not poverty, my dear sir, though the change is certainly great to me, but still I can endure it without a murmur. The Morley Court estate I propose to place immediately in the hands of trustees, for the purpose of paying off the debt. In the first place, the house and grounds must be kept up in the most thorough repair; the game must be properly protected; none of the old servants or labourers must be discharged. I would rather deprive myself of every superfluity than such should be the case. As near as I can recollect, not having my accounts with me, these charges amount to about eleven hundred per annum. That paid, there will still remain between nine and ten thousand per annum, to discharge the amount now claimed, and in eleven years it will be done. I have a considerable sum with me here, in money and letters of credit; but there are various things to be paid, some old people and

pensioners to be provided for, and thus I shall soon get through that which I have. I think these proposals are so fair that they will not be refused, especially if by any chance one of those extraordinary coincidences, which sometimes cross us in life, has occurred in this instance, as I am led to suspect by some words in your letter. Is the young man you mention a fair-haired, pale-faced lad, with a look of sickly dissipation about him? If so, I rather imagine I once saved him from the gallows, and it is his sister, in regard to whom I wrote you a long epistle. Shakspeare says that our bad deeds turn round and whip us; but it would seem that our good deeds do so too, if I am to lose almost all I possess in consequence of having interposed between this youth and destruction. I am sorry to say that, owing to the uncertain course I have pursued, your letter has been lying here for two months;"—and Morley went on to enter into the details of the changes he intended to make in his own mode of living, and to give directions for all the necessary papers to be forwarded for his signature as speedily as possible. When he had concluded, he returned to the saloon, where he found Lieberg seated near one of the windows, gazing forth in meditation.

"I am afraid, Morley," said the latter, as soon as he heard his friend's step, "that you have had bad tidings from England."

"I have," replied Morley. "You are a strange reader of human countenances, Lieberg. I thought I had guarded mine so carefully that no emotion could be apparent."

"It is my belief," rejoined Lieberg, "that everything that seems extraordinary may be accounted for with the most perfect ease; so that there is not a miracle, from the creation of this world down to Aaron's voracious walking-stick, which ate up the walking-sticks of all the Egyptians, that could be explained to us in a single word, only that poor fool Eve, after having eaten half the apple, stopped short in a fright, and was not wise enough to make even one good meal of the tree of knowledge. See how everything that we think strange becomes ridiculously simple when it is explained. You judge me a great reader of countenances; now, I never looked at your face at all, but merely read my letters while you read yours, and there found news which of course has reached you."

"That I have lost a considerable property," replied Morley, "and have to pay back rents to an immense amount."

"And are you aware to whom?" demanded Lieberg.

"I suppose, from the similarity of the name, and from the description of my friend, Mr. Hamilton," Morley answered, "it is to that William Barham of whom you and I know a good deal."

"To be sure," rejoined Lieberg, with his eye flashing; "I felt certain that something of the kind would happen at the time."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Morley, with much surprise; "how so?—why so?"

"Because," replied Lieberg, with his lip curling, "I never saw a man caress a scorpion, or put a viper in his bosom, that, sooner or later, he was not stung. Would to God I had hanged him!"

"I am much obliged to you for your kind interest," replied Morley, with a melancholy smile; "but if the thing was destined to happen at all, I am well pleased that it is as it is—not for the sake of that weak and vicious young knave, but for his sweet sister's sake. He will only use his fortune ill; but she will, of course, come in for a part, and thus be placed in a station for which she was evidently intended by Heaven. But now, Lieberg, let us

speak of something more immediate. I am sorry to say our companionship must soon end; as I have assigned the greater part of my property to pay off this unexpected debt, retaining to myself not more than seven hundred a-year, all my expenses must, of course, be curtailed, and I can no longer afford to travel in the way that befits you."

"Nonsense, Morley," replied his companion; "you can very easily reduce your expenditure to the scale required, without depriving me of the pleasure of your society, or yourself of the gratification and advantage of travelling with so pleasant and instructive a companion as myself. You can diminish your whole host of lackeys, send your old grey-headed friend to England, and keep the most useful of your men. Get rid of your courier, in the very first place, both because you don't want him, one being quite enough for you and I; and, secondly, because he is a very bad one, while mine is the best that ever cheated a master, bullied an innkeeper, defrauded a postilion, or gave a hint to a bandit. Then, as for the rest, we need not travel more rapidly than suits your purse; you shall pay for whatever additional horses are necessary to my carriage, in consequence of your being with

me, but, of course, no more; and, I can assure you, all this may be done upon even less than you propose. Try, at least,—try for a few months! If you refuse to do so, I shall conceive that you take advantage of this circumstance to draw off your forces."

Morley felt that he could not refuse to make the experiment, though he certainly had misgivings; but he steadfastly and strictly held his resolution of curtailing all his expenses, from that very moment. He explained to his servants, that he had met with a severe loss, and though a younger and more active attendant might have been preferable, in many respects, yet he retained no one about his person, but old Adam Gray, knowing that the good man would feel pained not to serve him, even though he were to pension him off, and leave him to spend his latter days in peace. His carriage he immediately ordered to be sold, and for want of knowledge how far his limited income would go, denied himself, at first, many an indulgence which he could very well afford. He divided his expenses into weeks, and almost into days, and bound himself down to all those small and narrow economies which are always a painful thing to a generous mind, and are only to be

compensated by the internal satisfaction of doing that which is just and right.

Upon the whole, the circumstances in which he was so suddenly placed, proved beneficial to the heart of Morley Ernstein. He had other subjects for thought given him, besides the bitter disappointment which he had endured. He had now matter for activity, energy, determination, self-denial. He had to keep his spirit from repining at petty evils, he had often to struggle with his inclinations upon small points, and that habit gave him power to strive more successfully on greater occasions.

The conduct of Lieberg towards him was, apparently, all that was kind. At first, while he knew that the weight which had been suddenly cast upon his young friend, had produced a great reaction of the mind, he tempted him in no degree to go beyond the limits of a strict economy; but as the immediate effect wore away, he certainly did cast inducements in his companion's path, to spend money which might have been spared. Two or three times, too, when tempted suddenly, Morley forgot his altered circumstances, and yielded without consideration. He bought things that were unnecessary, he gave an order which he was sorry for but would not re-

scind; and Lieberg with pleasure saw a probability of leading him to overstep the bounds of the income he had left himself, and plunging him into difficulties which might bring on more false steps to remedy.

For the present, however, Morley was safe; for the sum which he had brought with him from England was so much larger than he required, on his reduced scale of expenditure, that he could fall back upon it at any moment, though he did so with regret.

Thus passed a month in Rome; and though Morley Ernstein often thought of Juliet Carr, and wondered whether she was or was not in the same town with himself, he met her not in public or in private, while the period of his stay in Rome wore rapidly away.

CHAPTER XVI.

In early youth there are pleasures in all seasons of the year; and, as the schoolboy-story goes, it is difficult to choose between the glowing summer, with its brightness and its smiles—the sweet spring, with its soft breezes and its flowers—the brown autumn, with its fruits, and days of harvest—and the hardy winter, with its sports, and merry nights. But, believe me, reader, as one advances in life, the days that we would choose are always warm ones; and putting the brighter season of the year out of the question, the only difficulty is, to say, which is most grateful; that brief return of summer-like hours, which generally takes place in the commencement of November—like that return of prosperity towards the end of life, which some-

times brightens the fate of men who have long struggled with adversity; or the burst of warmth and sunshine, which often, in the early Spring, forestalls the summer—like the splendid vision of a great and glorious career which presents itself in hours of meditation to the unchastised eyes of youth.

It was in the end of February, however, with days warmer than many in June, with a balmy air, and a clear sky, that some travellers, with whom the reader is already well acquainted, took their way as nearly as possible by the same course that Morley Ernstein had pursued towards the classic land in which he was now sojourning.

Nor let it seem strange and romance-like, or make any one doubt the accuracy of this true history, that three parties of people, without any common consent amongst them, are here represented taking exactly the same path to a particular object, when there were five or six other roads open before them. Ay, but dear reader, it is the very question which you are begging. If you remember rightly, at the period of which we are now speaking, a tremendous storm had swept the Alps, greatly injuring two of the principal passages; the Splugen was impassable,

neither of the St. Bernards could be thought of either very late or very early in the year; and Mont Cenis could only be passed in Traineaux; but the Brenner was, and is passable, and convenient at all seasons, though sometimes the traveller is very cold before he gets at it. The convenience of this passage, especially to an invalid, in the early month of which we speak, was the cause why it was chosen by the party to whom we now return; for one of that party was an invalid.

It was on one of those warm days of February, then, which generally brighten a part of the coldest season of the year, that a splendid green chariot, quite new, with much more silver about it than was in good taste—with a courier behind, dressed out to the highest pitch of courierism—and a lady's maid, of a very different appearance, neat, plain, and staid—drove along one of the roads that traverse the Black Forest, taking its way towards the small town of Schaffhausen. The vehicle was, nevertheless, at the distance of several leagues from that place; and as it ascended one of the tall hills which diversify that part of the country, a wide extent of forest ground was displayed to the eye, undulating into all the most beautiful forms, with

the yellow sun resting upon the bare, leafless branches of that ocean of trees, which—although not a bud could be perceived upon the closest inspection, nor the slightest promise of the spring —yet bore over all, when beheld from afar, a kind of misty bloom, which is not seen in the earlier part of winter, and is difficult to account for.

The air was so warm that Helen Barham, at the request of her sick brother—who was now journeying for his only chance of life, towards that land where so many of the children of the north have laid their bones—opened the window of the carriage, and let in the breath of spring, which for a time seemed to revive the invalid. She herself leant forward, and gazed over the prospect, enjoying it with a spirit attuned to every thing that is beautiful, but with feelings saddened by a partial knowledge of her brother's perilous state; though William Barham himself, like most sufferers from the same malady, was utterly ignorant of the fate that hung over him, and had that very morning been cursing the doctors, for some little inconvenience which he had undergone at the last inn, declaring that if they had let him remain in England, he would have been well long before.

Helen gazed, as I have said, pleased but somewhat sorrowful; and, indeed, there is nothing on earth I know more melancholy, than to look over one of the bright scenes of nature with an eye fresh from the bed of deadly sickness. There is a strange and awful contrast in it: it makes life seem so utterly vain and worthless, that all we have been taught to prize turns suddenly, like the fabled fruits, to dust and ashes; and our heart sinks with a conviction of the emptiness of everything below, even before it can rise with the consciousness of a better state beyond.

Helen gazed, then, and meditated; and her lovely eyes filled with tears. At that moment her brother's voice said, "Helen;" but for a short time she would not look round lest he should see the drops upon her eyelids, and divine their cause. But the next moment, he repeated the word "Helen" in a tone that alarmed her, and when she did turn, his countenance alarmed her still more. His cheeks had become more hollow, the red spot which had been constantly there for some weeks was gone, his temples seemed fallen in, and the thin light hair lay more wild upon his brow than usual. There was a transparent greyness,

too, about the flesh which Helen had never seen before, in him, but had marked it too well in another; and when once seen, it is never to be forgotten. At the same time a sort of spasmodic gasping seemed to convulse his chest, and his hands lay blue upon his knees.

"Helen!" he cried—"Helen! I feel very queer. Don't let them go on in this mist. Stop the carriage—I should like to get out. The air is so thick here I cannot breathe. Stop the carriage, girl, I say! Those d—d doctors, if they had but left me in England I should have been well by this time. That mist——"

Helen let down the window hastily, and called to the postilions to stop, but they did not hear her, and it was some time before she could catch the ear of the courier. At length, however, the carriage paused; and the door was opened, and, by a great effort, William Barham raised himself from his seat, and fell forward into the arms of the courier. The man carried him to the bank, and placed him at the foot of a tree, but the unhappy youth sunk back upon the grass with his eyes closed; while the same death-like pallor continued upon his countenance, and a quick, hard-drawn respiration shook his emaciated frame. Helen sprang from

the carriage after her brother, and knelt beside him, her heart palpitating with apprehension, and her eyes filled with the tears of natural affection, no less keen and sensible because he who lay there dying before her had been so frequently the cause of pain, and sorrow, and anxiety. She bade the man bring water from the stream to throw upon his face; but though he went civilly to obey, yet he shrugged his shoulders, saying, in French—"It is of no use, Mademoiselle—he is dying."

Oh! of all the many painful things of earth, there are few more terrible than to stand by the side of a being that we deeply love, watching the last struggles of departing life, looking round for aid, consolation, and support, and finding about us none but indifferent strangers, who view our sorrow and its cause but as a scene upon a theatre. Though she knew that medical aid was useless, what would not Helen Barham have given, at that moment, for the presence of a physician, for the presence of any friend! But all she could do was to clasp her hands, and gaze through her tears upon the unanswering countenance of her brother, expecting every moment to see the spirit depart. After the courier had been gone for a minute, however, a

hasty step called her attention, and then a voice which seemed familiar to her ear, asking aloud, in English—"What's the matter—what's the matter?"

Helen looked up, and the face of Harry Martin met her eyes.

"Oh, I am so glad to see you!" she exclaimed. "My brother—my brother!—he is dying, I am afraid."

Harry Martin said, in his own heart, "And no bad job either!" But there was too much of the milk of human kindness mingled with his rough nature to let him utter one word which could pain poor Helen Barham at that moment.

"I am very glad to see you ma'am," he replied; "but sorry to find you in such a state. But why did you take the young man out of the carriage? The place they call Steig is only two miles off; the doctor will be there in half an hour, to see our poor old woman who broke her leg. Better put him in again, Miss. Take the maid with you, inside; I'll jump up behind, and we'll soon be there."

The courier came back with some water in his hands, but though thrown upon the face of the unhappy youth, it produced no effect, except a slight shudder which passed over his

frame. The suggestion of the man Harry Martin was then followed. He himself carried the almost lifeless body of William Barham to the carriage, and placed him in it; while Helen, taking her seat beside him, supported his head upon her arm, and the door being closed after the maid had entered, they proceeded on their way.

The postilions drove quick—much more so, indeed, than any money would have induced them to do—and in about twenty minutes the chariot stood before the little post-house. Much to the satisfaction of Harry Martin, the surgeon who had been attending old Mrs. More was seen, as they came up, in the very act of getting into his ancient caleche, to rumble back again to Freidburg, and, springing down, the Englishman stopped him, and told him what had occurred. The surgeon followed him instantly to the side of the vehicle, but when they came up, the post-master, the servants, and the courier were all whispering round, Helen's beautiful face was buried in her handkerchief, and the dead body of William Barham lay beside her, with the head resting upon her shoulder.

Harry Martin sprang round to the other side of the chariot, opened the door, and, raising

the corpse in his powerful arms, bore it into the inn. Helen started, and looked round for a moment, as she felt the weight that had leaned upon her removed; but then bent down her head again, and once more covering her eyes, wept bitterly, without making any movement to quit the carriage. In another instant, however, Harry Martin was at the door again, and gently laying his hand upon her sleeve, he called her attention, saying—"You must get out, Miss Barham, I fear, for there is much to be done.—Be comforted madam," he added, in a low tone—"be comforted. Ay, and thank God! Remember, it might have been worse—much worse."

Helen dried her tears, and entered the inn, where much sad business lay before her. Luckily, however, she was amongst kind-hearted and honest people, and the only effort that was made to wrong her in any respect was on the part of her brother's courier. He was detected in pilfering and cheating, on the day after the funeral of William Barham, by the keen eyes of Harry Martin, who, as he himself said, not knowing the laws of the country, ensured that the rogue should not go without punishment by thrashing him most terribly on the spot, and at

the moment. He then reported his conduct to Miss Barham, and the man was accordingly dismissed, so that Helen was left in a small German village, without any counsel or assistance of the kind and character which she most needed, to choose her own plans, and to follow out the curious windings of that fate which had placed her in so many an unforeseen position through life. She had been compelled to choose her course before, in circumstances that may seem to the reader far more difficult; but, strange to say, now that great wealth was at her command, and that all the self-named friends and humble servants who are always ready to bow down and worship at the shrine of the great god of this world, were prepared to court and seek her, and show her kindnesses and attentions, not the slightest of which her high qualities of mind and heart would have won from them had she remained poor,—strange to say, she felt more embarrassed, more anxious, more doubtful in acting for herself, than she had felt when left, by her father's death, to provide by her own exertions food for her brother and herself.

At one time, she thought of returning to England; and, perhaps, had she been a person

to consult the dictates of prudence alone, she would have done so; but alas! reader, Helen Barham was not by nature a prudent person. She was good, indeed,—she was very good; and she had strong and fine principles, but it was from her heart that her goodness proceeded—in her heart that her principles dwelt. On the present occasion there was some secret longing —some inclination hidden from herself which made her anxiously desire to go on towards Italy; and though, at first, she felt some sort of fear at the mere idea of doing so, of taking so long a journey by herself, of encountering strange scenes and strange people, and undergoing all the dangers and difficulties of the road, yet these apprehensions soon disappeared, and she reasoned down every other objection in her own mind.

Nor did many real obstacles present themselves. All her brother's affairs had been settled before she left England, and she came in as the clear and sole heir, he having died under age, of the whole property which they had lately acquired. The steps necessary to be taken in consequence of his decease, the lawyers were very willing to carry through without her presence, and Helen having once

written to England and received an answer, openly took the resolution of going on to Italy, —speaking the truth when she said that she herself did not feel well, and would probably be better for the air of a milder climate.

There was a difficulty, indeed, in procuring an honest and respectable servant, and her experience of the last courier did not tend to give her any great confidence in that sort of cattle. But she was not destined to proceed alone. The man Martin and his wife had shown her that devoted attention and respect which could only spring from deep gratitude; and although the good old lady, Mrs. More, was still in a very feeble and even dangerous state, they had lost no opportunity of offering to Helen every attention and assistance. The funeral of William Barham had been arranged and carried through by Harry Martin himself, who had by this time learnt to converse in a somewhat barbarous kind of German, and many of the painful particulars which attend the act of committing our kindred clay to the earth had been spared to Helen by his consideration for her.

When he now heard that she was going on to Italy, he made all the preparations, took her orders, as if he had been her servant, and often

gazed wistfully in her face, with a look that seemed to imply there was something in his mind which he wished to speak, without presuming to do so. He often, too, held long consultations with his wife; and, in the end, he came one morning suddenly into the room which Helen had made her sitting-room, saying, without any preface—"I can't think of your going to Italy by yourself, Miss Helen. I know you talk of getting a courier fellow at Schaffhausen or Constance; but bless you, ma'am, he's as likely to cheat you as the other, and you are going into a place where there are blackguards of all sorts. Now, it's very possible, ma'am, that, from what you know of me, you may think I am not a very likely person to take with you, and that I may just prove as bad as the rest of them you would meet with; but I give you my word of honour, that I never cheated any one in my life, though many a time I have done, perhaps, what may be worse. But, however, I would not wrong you in any way for a great deal more than the world, and if you were to give me to keep for you a hundred thousand pound without counting it, you should have every farthing back again, if I were starving."

"I am quite sure of it, Martin," replied Helen

Barham, with one of her sweet confiding smiles; "I should not in the least mind putting all I have in the world in your hands. But what is it you wish to propose? You could not quit this poor lady in her present state——"

"Why, Miss Helen," replied Harry Martin, "that is just what I have been talking to my wife about. She is not the least afraid of staying here to attend to her mother, till I go with you to Italy and come back again. What I want is, just to go along with you, on the outside of the carriage, to see that nobody does you any harm. You can get a courier fellow where you can find one, for you see I know nothing about that sort of business, and should not exactly like such a thing either; but I will see that he keeps all straight, and when once you are safe, and amongst people who will love you, and take care of you, as you ought to be, I can come back again, or Jane can come to me, as the case may be."

Helen took a day to consider, but her consideration ended in her adopting the plan which was proposed; and though she obtained a courier with a good recommendation, Harry Martin attended her onward into Italy.

CHAPTER XVII.

THAT season of the year was approaching when it is necessary for foreigners to quit Rome, if they hold their life very dearly; and Morley Ernstein, though certainly with no thought of malaria, had more than once proposed to Lieberg to pursue their way to Naples; but for some reason best known to himself, the latter had always made some excuse to delay. In the meantime, he surrounded Morley Ernstein with temptations of all sorts, upon which we will not dwell, having already displayed the course which he followed, and the means which he took, and it being unnecessary to repeat nearly the same story. He did not succeed, it is true, to any great extent. Some few pieces of extravagance, Morley certainly was led to commit—

some few acts which he regretted—not many, but enough to give Lieberg encouragement to pursue his plan with good hope of success at last; for the water does not more certainly wear the stone over which it passes, than a constant familiarity with vicious scenes destroys the moral principle in the heart of man.

Morley Ernstein would not approach the gaming-table, however, neither would he drink to anything like excess, though that also was tried by his dear friend, who well knew, that, as in the case of the Santon, one folly of such a kind opens the door to vices of all sorts. It may be asked what was the object of all this? —it may be said that there must be a motive for all human actions. Reader, I cannot clearly tell you what the object was; and Lieberg's conduct certainly seemed more fiend-like than human. He afterwards, indeed, uttered some dark words, which were never explained, and might be untrue; but if there was not some deep-seated cause of enmity towards Morley Ernstein in his bosom, arising in circumstances that we know not, we can only guess at his purposes and motives. To degrade Morley in the eyes of Helen Barham, was certainly one end in view; but besides this, we have seen

that his young companion had on more than one occasion thwarted him in an object of passion, had mortified his vanity and wounded his pride; and if we take these causes of offence, acting upon a malignant mind, together with the natural antipathy that the evil feel towards the good, and the jealous hatred of a man who sees another preferred by the being that he loves, the motives may, perhaps, be considered sufficient for his conduct. There may, indeed, have been something more—I am inclined to believe it was so—but what, I know not.

The struggle was still going on with Morley Ernstein between temptation and resistance, when, one day, as he was passing along the Piazza del Popolo, he saw a magnificent carriage, undoubtedly of English construction, standing before the great hotel, the name of which I forget, with two or three servants round the door, and the usual quantity of lackeys, couriers, and ciceroni at the entrance of the inn. When his eyes first lighted upon it he was at a considerable distance; and while he was still some thirty yards off, a lady came out of the hotel with a quick step, and entered the vehicle. The door was closed, the order given where to drive, and the carriage, taking a

turn, dashed past Morley the moment after. There was an earl's coronet and emblazoned arms upon the panel, and Morley, raising his eyes to the window, beheld the countenance of Juliet Carr. How often had he seen that face with joy—ay, even after hope had passed away; and the first sensation had always been pleasure; but now, there was something in Juliet's dress and appearance—something in the magnificence of the equipage—something, perhaps, in his own pre-conceived suspicions, which made the sight of her he loved feel like a heavy blow upon his heart. She evidently did not see him, and was speaking with a smile to some one else who was in the vehicle with her. Morley paused for an instant to recover breath, and then advancing to the inn, determined to have his doubts satisfied, he asked an English servant, who was still gazing after the carriage, whose it was.

The man was one of those saucy English footmen who are the disgrace of many of our noble houses; and to any one but a man of Morley's distinguished appearance he might have made an insolent reply. To him, however, he answered, in a civil tone—"The Countess of Clavering, sir."

"Lord Clavering has not long been married, I think," said Morley, in as firm a voice as he could command.

"About a month, sir," replied the man, with a grin, "and he has already gone back to England to attend the house of peers. That was my lady who just drove away."

Morley turned with his heart burning and his brain whirling round; but, pausing after he had taken a step or two, with a bitter smile curling his lip, he took out his card-case, and, walking back, gave the man a card, saying—"That for Lady Clavering, with my congratulations."

The attempt to describe the feelings of Morley Ernstein, when the full agony burst upon him, would indeed be vain. His passionate indignation approached nearly to madness; his bitter, bitter anguish of spirit might have tempted him, at that moment, to commit any act which his worst enemy could wish. He felt it—he knew it to be so—his command over himself was gone, and he feared to return to the inn where he had left Lieberg, lest he might be led into some irretrievable step of folly or of vice. He wandered, then, through the streets of Rome for several hours, with the

hurried pace and unequal step of a man torn by terrible emotions. He saw nothing that passed him; his eye marked none of the objects it rested upon; his spirit, busy within itself, seemed to have lost communication with the bodily senses; and it was nearly night when he was recalled to himself by some one suddenly seizing his arm, and exclaiming—"What is the matter, Morley? I have been following you this half hour, and you do not seem to know where you are going, or what you are doing."

"Nor do I, Lieberg," replied Morley. "All I have undergone is not equal to this."

"Nay, nay," said Lieberg; "come back to the hotel, and tell me what is the matter. By keeping your griefs and anxieties to yourself you more than double them; and not only that, but you are unjust to me. In striving to suggest those things which might divert your mind without knowing what it is that weighs upon it, I very often may propose the worst things when I wish to offer the best. I beseech you, Morley, tell me all."

"I will, Lieberg—I will," replied Morley. "I will; but let us go home first;" and walking quickly on by the side of his companion he took his way to the hotel, where, casting himself into

a chair, he covered his eyes with his hands for two or three minutes to collect his thoughts, and then gave Lieberg a hurried and confused account of his attachment to Juliet Carr, and all that had occurred in the course of that true love, which had run even more roughly than is usually the case with the troubled course of human affection.

After he had brought his narrative up to the events of Venice, he paused, and Lieberg replied—"I had known something of all this, Morley, but not accurately, and I see I have made several mistakes in dealing with you. I did not know that you loved her so intensely. You may think me light, but my passions and attachments are as strong, or stronger than your own. I believed that you would have acted, if you truly loved her, as I would have acted under similar circumstances, that you would have pursued her, struggled against her resolutions, combated her arguments, set at nought idle vows, and ultimately won her for your happiness and for her own. But I forgot, Morley, that you are less experienced in all things than I am, and though passion may give the impetus to action, it is experience that must guide it to success. I forgot this, I say, and fancying that you loved her with one of those half loves,

which may be diverted by pleasures and occupations, or swallowed up in another attachment, I endeavoured to lead your mind upon a course it could not follow. Now, however, I am convinced that you do love—at least I believe so, but I shall soon see, by the steps which you once take when your eyes are open. You seem to think that she has true affection for you; and, though from your agitation now, I suppose you have seen her again, and that she has once more treated you with the same cruel coldness, if you do love her, you will pursue her with that vigour of determination which will sweep away all obstacles. There is a might in real passion to which all inferior things soon bow, and which woman's heart can never resist, even for an hour, when once convinced that it is truly present. But that conviction cannot be produced by any sign of weakness,—you must show her that you love her, as none but strong and powerful hearts can love. That you are resolved to possess her, or to die——"

"Vain, vain, vain!" cried Morley, in bitterness of spirit. "It is all now in vain; she did love me; but driven by some promise extorted by her father, I suppose, she is now the wife of another!"

Lieberg started, and gazed upon him in sur-

prise, then grasped his arm, and, with his dark star-like eyes fixed on his face, exclaimed—"Take her from him! What right has he to possess her? Is she not yours? Yours by the bond of the heart's affection—yours by the tie that is beyond the earth—yours by the union of spirit with spirit! Talk not to me of human laws and ordinances, where the soul itself recognises a rule that is defined. You are her husband, if with the true intensity of heaven's own fire you love her and she loves you. You are her husband, I say, and every hour of her union with another is adultery. Take her from him, Morley—take her from him, be he who he may. Scruple at no means, stop at no pitiful considerations; it is due to her as well as to yourself—it is due to her in every sense. Think, think of the long and lasting misery that she must endure. Do you not know—are you not sure that every hour she must recollect you? What human ordinance will blot you out from her memory? What empty words, spoken at an altar, will erase from her heart the husband of her early dreams. Morley, if you are a lover—if you are a man—you will spare that sweet, mistaken girl the hell-fire tenderness of him whom she cannot love!"

"Hush, hush, hush!" cried Morley. "You will drive me mad!"

"You are mad already, Morley," replied Lieberg, "or you would fly to her at once. You would show her the brow which she loves, scathed with the lightning of passion, the form of him to whom she promised heaven, blighted by the consuming hell of disappointed affection. You would call upon her to remedy the wrong that she has committed—you would urge her with those words of power, the omnipotent magic of love, to save you from despair, destruction, and death, and to give you back the joy of which she has robbed you."

Thus did he proceed, reader, adding to the words he spoke that overpowering eloquence of look, gesture, and tone, which has far more effect than language, but can never be described. Let it be remembered, too, that this was addressed to Morley Ernstein at a moment when the whole powers of his mind were shaken by the agony he endured, when reason herself tottered on her throne, and despair had broken down the great prop of all good principle—hope. He sat and listened, not without a knowledge that there was wrong and evil in the words he heard; but it was but as a man for whom all

life's joys and expectations are extinct, and who, in a moment of frenzied desperation, takes quietly the cup he knows to be poisoned, and drains it with a bitter smile.

At length, however, he rose, and said, "Lieberg, I will leave you for to-night. I cannot converse with any one—my story is scarcely told, but a few words more will do it. She is married to a man as old as her father—to a Lord Clavering——"

"Why, he is just gone to England!" exclaimed Lieberg.

"I know it," answered Morley, "and has left her here."

"Fly to her, Morley—fly to her!" cried Lieberg, grasping his hand—"fly to her this very night!"

"No," answered Morley, "no! Whatever I do, I must have time for thought."

Thus saying, he left him, and in the silence and solitude of his own chamber paced up and down for more than an hour, with the better spirit within him struggling vehemently against the spell, but too weak to cast it off by its own efforts.

"I must fly," he said to himself, at length—"I must fly from this man, or he will destroy

me. I will fly speedily, both from him and from the presence of her who has cast away my happiness and her own. To-morrow I will seek for the means, and to-night I will see him no more. I will throw off his dangerous companionship. To avoid evil is the next thing to conquering it."

He opened the door to call his servant Adam Gray; the old man was sitting at the other side of the antechamber, and looking eagerly towards the entrance of his master's room.

"I have knocked twice, sir," he said, "but you did not hear me."

"I was busy with very sad meditations, Adam," replied his master.

"I thought so, sir," answered the old man, simply, "for I saw to-day the person who always causes them—I wish I might say all——"

"Say nothing, my good Adam—say nothing upon that subject," replied Morley.

"No; I must not tell anything now, sir," rejoined Adam Gray, "but the time will come for me to speak."

"You said you knocked," continued Morley, gravely; "what do you want?"

"Why, sir," replied Adam, "there's another person in Rome besides her; a person whom

you will be glad to see, I think; and who will be glad enough to see you, poor thing!"

"Who is that?" demanded his master; the expression, "poor thing," showing him that his old servant spoke of some person he believed to be attached to him, and making his mind immediately turn to Veronica. Alas, he never thought of Helen Barham!

"Why, sir, it is the young lady who was for some time with Lady Malcolm," replied Adam Gray. "Miss Barham, or Miss Helen, as her people always call her. I saw her maid looking about the town with the courier, about an hour or two ago, and told them where you were, so just now the courier brought this note for you."

Morley ordered lights into his room, and taking the note, read as follows:—

"My dear Sir;

"Although, under ordinary circumstances, it might seem strange for me to ask you to come to see me, yet I feel that it would show a want of gratitude were I to be in the same city with yourself and not tell you that I am here. But I have another excuse for that which I acknowledge I am very willing to do. You are, I dare say, aware, by this time, of my poor bro-

ther's death, and that the property which, to my great regret, he claimed and obtained from you, has descended to me. There is still, however, some business to settle in regard to it, which I am sure he would have wished to arrange himself as I propose, if his life had been spared to do so. In regard to these arrangements, I could much wish to speak with you, as well as to assure you that I am, ever most truly,

"Your grateful,

"HELEN BARHAM."

"P. S. I will wait at home to-morrow till you call, unless you let me know that it is inconvenient to do so on that day."

Morley answered the note at once, and named the hour, and this return to the ordinary things of life had some effect in calming his mind again. Twice he asked himself why Adam Gray had called Helen "poor thing," but he turned his thoughts away from the images to which the reply gave rise.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PALE, haggard, and sick at heart, Morley Ernstein rose from his sleepless bed, and made preparations of various kinds for that speedy departure, which all the varied trains of thought that had visited his mind during the night had but shewn him to be the more necessary. The next thing to be done was, to announce his determination to Lieberg, and for that purpose he proceeded to the saloon, where his companion was already seated at breakfast. There was a sparkling sort of smile upon Lieberg's countenance which Morley was never very fond of. He had often seen it precede conversations that ended or went on in a painful manner; but it was Lieberg's general plan never to commence any subject himself, except of an ordinary kind, and on this occasion, as usual, he suffered Morley to speak first, merely giving him the common salu-

tation of the morning. Now, as we have shewn, the character of Morley Ernstein was intimately mixed of good and evil, but he had one invariable quality, which was, frankness; at times carried too far, perhaps—too far, at least, for his own earthly interest: truth can never be carried too far for Heaven. In the present case, he not only told Lieberg his purpose, but he told him why; he acknowledged that he feared him; that their views on the subject which they had discussed on the preceding night were as different as light from darkness; but that he dreaded lest, under strong temptation, he might yield, and never cease to regret that he had so given way.

"I believe, Lieberg," he said, "that you wish me well, and would direct me to what you conceive to be happiness. My view of that not-to-be-found jewel, however, can never be the same as yours; and though I thank you much for your good wishes, yet I must pursue my own plan."

Morley paid no great attention to his companion's countenance while he spoke, and yet it was worth observing. There was once or twice a look of displeasure, and once or twice a look of triumph, especially when the young Englishman owned that he feared his influence.

A scornful smile marked his lip, too, when Morley spoke of proceeding at once; but the whole settled down into an expression of calm, well-satisfied pride, and he replied, attaching himself, in the first place, to the words, "My view of happiness can never be the same as yours,"—"You must come to it, Morley," he said—"you must come to it. The time will be, believe me, when you will find such happiness as mine the only happiness to be procured. However, be it as you will! Take your own way! Go to Naples at once, and wait for me there till I come. I will not be long after you; and then, as I shall have nothing to tempt you with, you may pursue your journey with me in safety, through the sunny land of Greece, and perhaps to the brighter and more ardent skies of Syria. There we shall see whether even your cold blood may not be warmed into a flame. But where go you after breakfast? Let us, at least, spend this last day of your stay in Rome together."

"I fear that cannot be," replied Morley; "I have various things to do, and have an engagement at eleven; but after two I am at your command."

Lieberg bit his lip, but made no reply, and Morley, as soon as he had finished his breakfast,

left the saloon, and proceeded to his own chamber. It happened, by the merest accident in the world, that after he had taken his hat and gloves, and given some additional orders to Adam Gray, he went out of his room by another door, on the side opposite to that which opened into the common vestibule, and issued forth from the hotel by a small staircase which he had only used twice before. It is true that, although he believed Helen Barham to be now placed by fortune far above Lieberg's pursuit, yet he felt no inclination to speak of her being in Rome at all; but still, in going out by the back way, he acted without premeditation, and without ever dreaming that he would be watched.

Had he gone through the anteroom, however, he would have seen that Lieberg's valet was waiting there; and there the man continued to sit, till Adam Gray came out of Morley's room, when a few words were interchanged between the two servants. The valet seemed surprised, and immediately went in to speak with his master; after which the old man's ear caught a furious imprecation, followed by a sound, as if the Count in his anger had struck the table a violent blow with his clenched fist.

In the meanwhile, Morley Ernstein walked on to the inn where Helen Barham was to be

found, and, on asking for her, was immediately admitted. She rose as soon as she saw him, a little fluttered and agitated, but with the mounting colour in her cheeks, the slight quivering of her beautiful lip, and the dancing light in her dark eyes, all adding to that loveliness which in itself was incomparable. She strove hard to be calm and placid, and indeed would sooner have become somewhat cold than otherwise, but it was a difficult thing for Helen Barham to be so. I have heard people called creatures of impulse, but she was a creature of emotions — tender, fine, high, noble, but still trembling, like a finely-balanced lever, at the lightest touch. She could not restrain her feelings; and as Morley met her, she looked so happy with her resplendent beauty, with all her wild grace, with light, and soul, and tenderness, in her eyes—she seemed to possess so much of everything that God can give to content the utmost expectations of a human creature, that Morley was forced to ask himself again why it was the old man had called her "Poor thing!" Morley fell into a very common error, notwithstanding all his own experience. It is, that we always make a mistake as to the source of happiness. It springs from within, and not from without. It is the water that gushes from the

rock of our own hearts, not the rain that dimples the stream, adding but a few drops to the current.

"I am most delighted to see you," said Morley, taking the hand she offered; "and though I know you must feel the loss of your brother deeply, yet I must still congratulate you on your accession to the fortune you now possess. I was always sure, my dear Miss Barham, that you would do honour to high station and extensive means, and I thank God that I see you now possessed of them!"

"If I had had either voice or choice in the matter," replied Helen, earnestly, "I never would have become possessed of them in such a way. A very small portion would have contented me; and the superabundance which I do possess is rather a burden than otherwise, especially as I feel that, to have taken it from you, is to have turned our heel against our benefactor."

"Not at all," answered Morley Ernstein. "It was perfectly your brother's right; and as soon as I became convinced that it was so, I could not have held the estate for a single hour. Neither did your brother behave at all unhandsomely in any of the proceedings regarding it——"

"Nay—nay," said Helen, holding up her hand—"though he did not, Sir Morley, and I believe would ultimately have done what was

right, yet his lawyers did behave unhandsomely in his name; but I have immediately taken means to remedy what was amiss."

"I do not know what you have done, my dear Miss Barham," said Morley, with a smile; "but I trust and hope that your kind and generous feelings have not induced you to undo anything that has been settled. What the law gives you, is yours; and as far as I am concerned in the matter, I cannot consent to your making any sacrifice — honour and common honesty forbid me; and now, having said this, let me enquire what it is that you have done?"

Helen was sitting beside him on the sofa, and for a moment she raised her bright eyes to his, with a look of internal satisfaction mingled with regard, which, if Morley had chosen to translate it, might have been read—"I have done that which gives me the highest delight, because you must and will approve it." But she did not answer exactly in those words, and withdrew her eyes again immediately, with a sigh, and a look of sadness, as if she saw something in Morley's countenance which she had not remarked before.

"What I have done," she said, "is only what is just and right. There has been no generosity—no flights of what people call fine feeling in it;

and I think you will confess at once that it is so, and not give me the greatest pain, by refusing to accede to that which your own heart will tell you is just, merely because it is proposed to you by a person whom you have already loaded with benefits. I think," she added, in a lower, but not less eager tone, "you would not willingly make me very unhappy."

"God forbid!" replied Morley, warmly. "What is there that I would not do to make you happy?"

Helen's cheek became a little pale, and, for a moment, she did not answer; but finding that he paused also, she said—"The fact is, simply, this: the property which my brother claimed, and recovered was bought from my grandfather, who, I am told, was the most careless and thoughtless of men. He did not, I am sure, intend to defraud your father, and acted without consideration. But, at all events, your father paid ninety-three thousand pounds for the estate; and the lawyers tell me, that if my grandfather had been still living, you could have claimed and recovered that sum from him. It is but just, then, that I should pay it back to you, and I have told the people in London, to place it immediately in the hands of your friend, Mr. Hamilton.—Nay, now,"

she added, "do not look grave and thoughtful —your heart tells you that what I propose is right."

"But—" said Morley Ernstein.

"Nay, nay," interrupted Helen, playfully; "I will have no buts. Tell me, Sir Morley, in former days—to remember which, connected with your kindness, will always be most delightful to me—did I not ever do what you told me, as soon as I was convinced that it was right?"

"You did, indeed," said Morley, with a smile; "but I wish first to be sure whether this is really right?"

"What would you do if you were in my place?" demanded Helen.

"As you have done," answered Morley.

"Ay, and perhaps more," said Helen. "You would do all that I should wish to do, but dare not offer, because I know you would reject it angrily."

"Not angrily—not angrily, with you," exclaimed Morley; "but firmly. You have already done as much, and more, than the most generous feeling could dictate; and as I believe it is a pleasure to you to do it, I will not refuse to accept what you propose, though I see that you do not know the whole circumstances. Let me tell you, then, my dear Miss Barham, what

they are, in some degree; for if you feel a pleasure in doing a generous act, the satisfaction will be doubled when you know that act relieves one who has the greatest regard for you from a severe embarrassment."

He then explained to her, that the only means he had found of paying the large claims against him were, to assign the rents of almost all his landed property, to dismiss his servants, to curtail his expenditure, and to live upon an income comparatively small and pitiful. Helen's cheek first grew pale, and then burned with the hue of crimson; and as he went on she burst into a bitter flood of tears, exclaiming—"And we have done this!—we have done this!"

Morley took her hand, and pressed his lips upon it, saying—"Others have done it, and were not to blame. You have remedied it all, and how am I to thank you?"

"Oh, no, no!" she exclaimed—"I have not remedied it all; I fear that I still am robbing you—robbing you of that fortune which you used so nobly; and that, too, when I owe you everything—life, and more than life; for in the state I was when you found me, I could not have lived long, and should not only have died, but have died with shame and misery!—Ah! you cannot tell, Sir Morley," she continued,

"how much sooner I would be a pensioner upon your bounty for a small pittance to supply my daily wants, than take from my benefactor that property which I cannot but feel of right is his."

"Not so, indeed!" answered Morley Ernstein; "it is not mine, Helen. It was of right your brother's, and is yours. I scarcely know, indeed, whether I am justified in not following out the plan that I had first proposed, and paying you all. But as you wish it, I will not insist upon that point; and now, tell me how you are, and let me hear all that has happened to you since we met."

"Why, I am well," replied Helen, wiping away the tears which still felt inclined to flow; "well, and yet not quite well. But speak of yourself—I scarcely dare to ask how you are, for I see that you are ill, Sir Morley."

"I must not have you call me by that name," said Morley Ernstein; "after the strange way in which our fate has been linked together, we can but look upon each other as brother and sister; and if you will let me, Helen, I will be a brother to you instead of him that you have lost."

"You have been a better brother already," replied Helen; "but you do not say, if you are

ill; and yet I am sure you are, for you are so changed."

"I have had much to pain me, Helen," answered Morley Ernstein; "very much."

"I know it—I know it," said Helen; "and it has been our doing—Morley."

The last word she pronounced after a moment's hesitation, and in so low a tone that he scarcely heard it; but yet the blood came up into her cheek, as if she had told him that she loved him.

"It was not on that account, Helen, that I have grieved," he replied. "Fortune could never disturb my night's repose; but there have been many other things pressing heavily upon my mind."

Helen cast down her eyes, and replied not; but the paleness that crept over her countenance might well shew that there were some emotions busy at her heart. Morley Ernstein was silent, too, for there was a light breaking upon him, to which he would have fain been blind. At length, Helen spoke, saying, with an effort—"I was in hopes I should have heard of your being very happy."

"It is quite the reverse, Helen," he answered. "Those bright days, which you once saw me enjoy, are past away for ever, and I have no-

thing left but to fly from myself, and from her who might have made my happiness, and has made me miserable."

"Oh, no, no!" cried Helen; "do not say so."

"Yes, indeed!" replied Morley Ernstein. "It is on that account I quit Rome to-morrow. Are you aware that she is in this city?"

"Who?—Juliet Carr?" exclaimed Helen.

"She who was Juliet Carr," replied Morley, bitterly; "now, Countess of Clavering."

Helen started from her seat, and clasping her hands, gazed wildly in Morley's countenance. "It is impossible!" she cried; and then sinking down upon the sofa again, she buried her face in her hands, murmuring some words that Morley did not hear, while the crimson was seen dying her temples, and her fine small ear. What were the mingled emotions that at that moment possessed her?—Who can say? She herself was not aware; so strange, so complicated, so contending were they.

The first thing that roused her, was Morley's voice: "You say it is impossible, Helen," he replied. "I begin to think all things possible. When those whom we love best, and to whom, of all the world, we have given least cause to treat us ill, destroy our peace, betray our trust, cast away our love, and even sacrifice themselves

for sordid motives, what may we not believe next?"

"O, you wrong her—you wrong her!" cried Helen Barham, raising her head, and speaking with enthusiastic eagerness. "You wrong her, Morley, most assuredly. There is something in this that you do not know—some cause she has for her conduct which will justify it, I am sure; or, at least, will palliate it. She may never be yours, but you must not cease to esteem her. I will take upon me to say, that she has not acted thus without some powerful, some overpowering motive."

"You judge her by your own heart, Helen," replied Morley. "No coronet would tempt you to such a union as this."

Helen would not be ungenerous, even by remaining silent, and she replied, eagerly, "You are wrong—you are wrong. She does love you,—she has ever loved you. She loves you still, whatever duty may say; and, though she may struggle to forget you, bound as she is to another, yet the struggle will be in vain, and will be more than a sufficient punishment for any weakness she may have shewn."

Poor Helen Barham knew not that whilst she fancied she was but doing justice to Juliet, and soothing the agonized feelings of Juliet's lover,

she was by every word giving force and vigour to the most terrible temptation which Morley had ever undergone. There seemed to be something peculiar in Lieberg's evil suggestions—something which made them resemble those of Satan himself. Every accidental circumstance gave them additional venom, and even words which were the most repugnant to all that is wrong, stirred them up in greater virulence and power than ever. Morley put his hands over his eyes, as if to shut out the temptation; but after a moment's pause, he rose, saying—"Helen, I must leave you. I will set out for Naples this very day, if it be possible. I take it for granted that your steps will soon be bent thither also. You must let me know when you arrive, for I believe the only society from which I could derive comfort and consolation, would be yours."

As he spoke he took Helen's hand, bidding her adieu, and she left it in his, gazing with an anxious and sympathizing look in his countenance, and thinking more of his sorrow than of the sweet and gratifying words that he addressed to herself.

"I will see Juliet," she said, "before I come. I believe that I can induce her to tell me all. You shall hear her motives as she gives them

to me, for I would fain restore to her your esteem."

"Let it be as it is, Helen," replied Morley, solemnly; "for it is less dangerous for me to despise her than to love her still."

Thus saying he left her, and was hurrying home, with his thoughts so agitated that he scarcely remarked a man who stood in his way at the bottom of the stairs, till Harry Martin stopped him, by pronouncing his name.

"I am afraid, Sir Morley," he said, as soon as the other paused—"I am afraid I gave you some offence by what I said to you in Germany, about some one that you trust. Now I——"

"You did, my good friend!" replied Morley; "but I was wrong, and you were right. All that is over—my eyes are opened, and I trust no more."

"That's right—that's right!" cried Harry Martin. "All may go well, then, and you may be as happy as the day is long; for if ever man was loved by an angel, you are, by one not very far from here."

"Hush!" cried Morley; "hush! You are mistaken altogether;" and, turning away, he hurried back as fast as possible to his own hotel, and quitted Rome ere the day was many hours older.

CHAPTER XIX.

A MONTH passed in Naples, and Morley strove to drown recollection, to drown thought, to drown the ringing echo of the tempter's words, to quell, by any means, the struggle that still went on in his heart—the longing, eager, ardent desire to fly to Juliet Carr, to tell her, with all the impetuous madness of intense passion, that he loved her still, to shew her that she had destroyed his peace for ever, and to leave her to decide, whether he were to live with her or to die by his own hand. He knew that it was frenzy—he knew that it was crime. With as much courage as any ancient warrior ever strove, he fought against the host of dark temptations that beset him, in the vain hope that time would mitigate the intensity of his

feelings; but time brought no balm—his heart knew no relief. The gay and gabbling crowd in the ball-room, the palace, and the theatre, distracted not his attention for a moment. With difficulty, even for a few minutes, did he fix his attention upon all the objects of ancient art, which formerly would have amused his fancy. The political strife of various parties which at that time convulsed all Europe, scarcely roused his mind from the bitter memories that were in his heart, to give it even a thought; and Morley's sole delight soon became to sail over the deep blue sea of the bay, gazing in melancholy listlessness upon the waters, and longing for a quiet abode beneath the rolling of those sunshiny waves.

It soon, however, grew a weariness and a pain to him, to be forced, even during a part of the day, to see and hear the merry multitudes of the siren city. The coarse and glaring vice, the utter moral degradation of almost all classes, the miserable laziness and destitution of the lower orders, the frivolous wickedness of the higher, all became an offence to his eyes; and he determined, at length, to get rid of the whole, and to remove to some distance from Naples, although there was one employment for a part of his day,

which could not be obtained without difficulty, anywhere but in the city. It may seem strange that this his sole occupation was the examination of almost all the principal London journals. But there was only one part of those journals into which he looked—only one name that he sought for. It was the name of Lord Clavering. From time to time, he found it amongst those of the most diligent attendants upon parliamentary duties. Morley read no more that day when he had once seen the name. He perused not the speech to which it was attached, nor examined the nature of the petition which the earl presented. He could not hate him more than he did, and he did not wish to hate him less; but still, to know that he was afar, that he was not in the same land with Juliet Carr, was something.

He resolved, at length, as I have said, to quit the city, and take up his abode at such a distance that he could continually send into Naples for intelligence, without setting his foot within the walls itself. The generous though just act of Helen Barham having removed the necessity for economy, Morley could indulge at ease whatever fancies suited his humour best at the time; and, rowing along the shores of the bay towards Sorrento, he pitched upon a solitary villa, not far from that place, towards Castela-

mare, as the house he should like to hire. It was seated upon the high rocky ground, and was visible from the sea; but on enquiring at the latter town, he found that there was no road to it but a mule-path, and that it was inhabited by the Italian family to whom it belonged. The latter difficulty, however, was speedily removed; gold was an object to the Italians, and none to Morley; and, while he had his boat, he needed no other road but the waves.

In this new abode, then, was he soon fixed, and certainly a lovelier scene never soothed the disappointed heart. The view over the bay was beyond description; a deep indentation of the shore brought the profound waters up to the very foot of the rock under the villa, and one of those arching caves, of which there are so many on the Sorrentine shores, admitted the sea still farther, so that a flight of steps from the house itself, similar to those near the villa Cocumella, led down by a subterranean passage to the verge of the bay; and Morley's boat could be brought in under the very crag on which his dwelling stood. A little farther on, however, a winding path, ornamented by some tall cypresses, led down to the shore, which was strewed at that spot with ruins of various ancient buildings, and covered almost to the edge of

the sea with all the wild flowers and rich creeping plants of that climate, while here and there the gigantic aloe had planted itself, giving a peculiar character to the picture, produced by no other European plant. High hills lay up behind; and, along the shore on both sides, appeared all that variety of rock, and precipice, and smooth descent, and soft sloping bank, which every one who has rounded that headland must remember. We will not dwell farther upon a description of the place, but will only add, that the usual drawback to all Italian scenery was found not far off, as one approached Sorrento, in numerous stone walls and narrow roads, forming a sort of labyrinth, which required some degree of knowledge and experience to escape from, in the attempt to find freer space upon the mountain tops beyond.

Here Morley dwelt in comparative peace for about a fortnight, with his establishment restored to its former scale, and moreover increased by six rowers for his boat, to whom one of the cottages in the vineyard was assigned as an abode. Although so grave and sad, he had contrived to make himself loved even by the light-hearted Neapolitans in his service. There are few people more really sensible of dignified and graceful manners than the

lower classes; and as we have already shown, there was a peculiar charm in the young Englishman's deportment, which only derived a greater interest from the gloom that had fallen over him. He was kind-hearted, and generous, too, and the only efforts that now seemed to interest him strongly, were those tending to increase the comfort and happiness of the people about him. He taught them to obey him promptly, to attend, even in their lightness, to his smallest sign or word; but he taught them also to respect, admire, and love him.

Old Adam Gray, too—though, to say sooth, he was not fond of the Italians—was a favourite amongst them, and they were always ready to shew him his way hither and thither, keeping up with him as he went along—partly by signs, partly by words—long conversations, of which neither party understood one-third.

It was thus one day, while his master was out sailing in the bay, that the old man had found his way to Sorrento, accompanied by one of the Neapolitan servants, named Giacchino, who understood somewhat more of English than the rest. He had gazed about upon the houses and villas, had gone down to see the remains of antiquity that protrude in some places from the

cliffs, and had bought a basket of fruit from one of the old women of the town, when suddenly—while he was yet counting out the interminable small pieces of coin, which seem invented, in several of the Italian States, for the torment of the passing traveller—he dropped a whole handful of them, exclaiming—"Good heavens, Mrs. Martin!—is that you? What could bring you to Italy?"

The person he addressed was a very pretty young woman, dressed in mourning, and her reply was simple enough, that she had followed her husband thither.

"Oh, I understand—I understand!" said Adam Gray; "though how he got out of York Castle I do not comprehend."

"No, you do not understand it at all," replied Jane. "My husband got out of York Castle by being pronounced innocent. But if you will come up to the villa just upon the hill, he will tell you the whole story himself. He came here out of Germany with dear Miss Helen, and I think he would like to see you, for we told him how kind you had been."

Without more ado, Adam Gray picked up the fallen money, and followed the young Englishwoman, leaving his Italian companion,

Giacchino, talking with a number of men in pointed hats, and somewhat Calabrese attire, who had come in with the apparent purpose of selling fruit and small birds. When Giacchino joined them, however, they were engaged in gossiping away the time with a man in the habit of a courier, whom Adam Gray had seen more than once before loitering about the doors of their inn at Rome, where he had filled the post of occasional *valet de place.*

We need not pause upon the interview between Adam Gray and the party at the villa to which he was conducted; but he found that Harry Martin was still in attendance upon Helen Barham, not being able, he said, to make up his mind to leave her, always fancying that some mischief would happen, if he were not near to take care of her.

"It's a strange whim of mine," he said, "but I can't get rid of it. However, I know that Miss Helen sent a note to your master at Naples yesterday, and when I can see her with plenty of kind friends about her I shall be content, and think her safe."

Adam Gray remained for a full hour at the villa, and, before he went, begged to pay his respects to Helen herself, who sent a message by him to Morley, telling him where she was,

and adding that she had something of importance to communicate to him, if he could call upon her the next day.

On returning to the spot where he had left his companion, the old man found the Neapolitan still laughing and chattering with the rest, and they proceeded on their way homeward together, both somewhat thoughtful, though the natural buoyancy of the Italian's spirit would not suffer him to bear the silence quite so long as the native of a more taciturn land.

"Those fellows will do some mischief before they are out of Sorrento," he said; "and that devil of a courier will lead them into no good."

"Ha!" cried Adam Gray, "do you know those people, then, Giacchino? Pray who may they be who are so mischievously disposed?"

"Why, that tall, good-looking fellow," replied the man, "was the head of the banditti that used to rob about Nocera and Salerno, and sometimes almost up to Portici on the other side. He gave it up of his own accord when the bands were put down, and is now a very good gardener. The rest are friends of his," he added, with a shrewd gesticulation, which conveyed the full sense of what he meant.

"And the courier?" demanded Adam Gray. "Pray who is he?"

"Oh, he has come with some Englishman," replied Giacchino—"a Count something or another, which would break an Italian's teeth to speak."

"There you are mistaken," exclaimed Adam Gray. "We have no counts in England, Master Giacchino, though there are viscounts enough in all conscience. But pray what was he doing with the banditti?—going to sell his master to them?"

"No, no," replied Giacchino; "he said his master would like to see them, and talk to them. It seems that he is fond of such fishes."

In such conversation they plodded on their way, till they reached the dwelling of the young Englishman, and the old man, leaving his companion below, proceeded through all the open doors and corridors of an Italian house, till he reached the room where Morley usually sat. He entered without ceremony, but was not a little surprised to find that his master was not alone.

Morley was standing with his hand leaning on the back of a chair, his brow knit, and his teeth closed, while Lieberg appeared within three or four paces, with his arms folded on his

chest, his head erect, and his dark eyes flashing like a thunder-cloud. What had previously taken place, no one ever heard, but it was clear that angry words had already passed between them.

"Your language, Sir Morley Ernstein," said Lieberg, "is well nigh insulting, and must not be repeated."

"I have told you, Count Lieberg," replied Morley, "the plain truth, for which truth you pressed me. Having to thank you for some kindness, nothing can be farther from my wish than to insult you; but, at the same time, you must not urge me too far. Your advice I relish not; and though I do not, as you insinuate, pretend to anything like perfect purity of thought, word, or action—God forbid that I should be such a hypocrite!—and though I may yield to temptation, when it comes upon me, as weakly as any man, yet I will never calmly and deliberately lay out a plan for seducing a woman from that faith to which she has sworn at the altar. When I said that I should consider myself a villain if I did so, I had a reference to my own feelings and my own principles, in direct opposition to which I have no right to act. You see the matter in a different light, and I pretend not to criticise or to censure your views or your

actions. The temptation may come, and I may fall, as you say; I fear it might be so—I am sure it might be so; but I will never seek the temptation myself."

"You will repent," replied Lieberg, still frowning on him—"you will repent your language towards me this night.—I am better as a friend than an enemy."

"You drive me, sir, to say harsh things," answered Morley, sternly; "but I fear you less as the latter than the former. One word more, Count Lieberg, before you go," he added, as Lieberg turned towards the door. I have this morning received a letter from a lady, whom I find you have seen oftener than I believed. I do not understand all that she means; but Miss Barham places the name of Count Lieberg so close to the term—'a man who persecutes me,' that, as we part apparently not soon to meet again, it may be as well to say, that I look upon that lady as a sister, will protect her as such, and will treat any man who insults or injures her, as I would one who wronged my nearest relation."

Lieberg's lip curled with a sarcastic smile. "Your knight-errantry, Sir Morley," he said, "may lead you into scrapes; but you are a very wise and prudent young man, and doubtless

will extricate yourself delicately from all embarrassments. As you have added a word to me, however, I must add one to you. It shall be a short one, for the evening sky is beginning to turn grey, and I must seek a more hospitable roof. It is this—do not cross my path, or I will blast you like a withered leaf; and so, good night!"

With his usual calm, firm step, Lieberg descended the stairs, and quitted the villa. Morley's eyes flashed; but old Adam Gray hastened to interpose, telling his master all that he had seen and heard during that afternoon.

"This is very strange!" said Morley, musing. "Send the man, Giacchino, to me—or, stay, ask him yourself, if the name the courier mentioned was that of Count Lieberg. He may be meditating some harm to that poor girl, and yet I must not—dare not go to Sorrento myself. Go, good Adam, and enquire. It is all very strange!—That Juliet should come to Sorrento, when she knows that I am so near!—It seems as if it were my fate to be doomed to do wrong, even when I labour to avoid it.—I will not go!"

Old Adam Gray came back in a moment, saying that Giacchino was quite sure that the name of Count Lieberg was the one he had heard; and Morley, seriously alarmed, instantly

took means to warn Helen of the vague, but not unfounded apprehensions which he entertained. He sent the peasant who farmed the estate attached to the villa, and two of his own servants, over to Sorrento, with orders to stay with the young lady, and give her protection during the night; and after explaining his motives for this step in a short note, he added—"I would have come myself at once, but that you tell me Juliet and her party from Sicily are about to join you this day at Sorrento. Dear Helen, I must never see her more, for I dare not trust myself. I am tempted in a way that you cannot divine; and I must fly from that temptation, lest even greater misfortunes fall upon her and me. Keep the men I send, till Juliet comes; after that, her servants, added to your own, will, I trust, ensure your safety."

"Now dispatch the people quickly, good Adam," said Morley, giving him the note; "but, above all things, bid them keep a horse saddled, and let me know if anything important occurs at Sorrento. They can be over here in less than ten minutes. Have all our men prepared for whatever may occur; and see if there be not some more horses to be procured in the neighbourhood. If so, let them be brought in. We might have to ride over in haste."

CHAPTER XX.

Lieberg had not said true when he declared that the evening sky was beginning to turn grey. It was purple that it grew, that intense deep purple which is only to be seen in southern skies, where the sunshine seems to infuse a tint of gold into the azure of the heaven, rendering it like the lazuli stone, in which the sparks of the metal may be seen through the fine hue of the gem. More and more red was every moment mingled with the blue, till the western horizon, where it lay upon the waters, glowed as if with intense fire, which seemed to catch the waves themselves, and all the distant sea was in a flame. The splendour of the hour, however, was unseen by the eyes of Morley Ernstein—but I use, perhaps, a wrong expression, it was

not altogether unseen; and though I am so near the end of my history, where events press for attention rather than scenes or sensations, I must still pause for a moment to show how he saw without seeing, and felt without perceiving.

When Lieberg had left him, and his orders had been given, he went forth from the house with his heart full of strong emotions. He stood upon the promontory over the cave, and gazed, or seemed to gaze, across the wide world of waters, lighted by the setting sun. Though he had heard many things that day to interest and occupy him—though he had learned that Veronica had abandoned the world and taken the veil, and that Juliet was once more drawing near—his mind was fixed upon himself, and upon the act he had just done—an act as great and important to him and to his future fate as if he had conquered a kingdom. He had broken a tie, bound round him by circumstances with such close and intimate folds, that it had appeared as if it could never be totally dissevered. He had cast off a fatal companionship for ever, which had endured already too long.

By a strong effort of determination, he had repudiated a society which seemed destined to corrupt all the pure current of his blood, like the envenomed garment of Alcides, though

happily for himself he had thrown it from him before it had entered into his flesh.

He stood, then, upon that promontory with his head erect, and his arms folded on his broad chest, feeling that he had done a right and a great act, that he had executed a strong and high determination, and deriving from the very fact the conscious dignity which the powerful performance of a wise resolution always imparts to the human mind. He marked not the sunset and its splendour—he marked not the illuminated ocean, or the classic shores in their purple shadows—he marked not the fire of the western sky, or the clouds glowing into a blaze above, but the whole sank into his spirit through the eye, and seemed to elevate his own sensations more and more by the harmonious tone of every thing around. He felt that it was in such a scene, in such a climate, in such an hour, that man might well do deeds worthy of his immortal soul. That under the eye of Heaven, and with the brightest of Heaven's works on every side, he might well purify his heart of its dross, and cast from him every baser thing. It was not unseen, then, all the loveliness that surrounded him; it was not unfelt; but, in the busy turmoil of his own thoughts, it was unmarked.

Ere the sun had quite gone down, however,

his mind became more calm, he recollected where he stood, he ran his eye along the line of coast, he raised it to the sky above, he gazed pensively at the sea below his feet, and marked the long, bow-like sails that skimmed across the waters towards the resting-place for the night.

The whole bay and the sea beyond it were alive with boats, and Morley Ernstein thought—"Amongst all those is probably one that bears to the same shore with myself, her who, I once believed, was to be my leading star to every high act and noble purpose; but who has left me in darkness and despair. Over those waters, her bark is steering, and, perhaps, her mind no longer with the eye of memory sees him whom she once loved, any more than her corporeal eye beholds me here. How calm everything is—how tranquil! and that small cloud, catching the last rays of the sun, glows like the conscious cheek of love. I wonder why all the boats are hurrying into Naples! This seems to me the very hour for lingering on the sea. I will go out and sail again;" and as he thus thought, he beckoned one of his boatmen, whom he saw on the beach below, to come up by the steps in the rock and speak with him. Ere the man could reach him, however, a change had come over the whole scene. The waves in the bay

became crested with white foam—a sudden rushing sound was heard. Then came a light breath of air; and then a number of orange trees and large oleanders, which were ranged upon the terrace of the villa, were levelled with the ground in a moment by a violent gust of wind. Morley himself, strong and powerful as he was, was obliged to catch at a great ilex for support.* Leaves and branches were torn up and whirled away, and a thin, dusty film was carried suddenly over sea and land, not sufficient to intercept the sight, but to render all the lately glowing features of the scene grey and sad. Whistling and screaming through the branches of the trees, over the rocks and stones, and through the windows and porticos, the storm rushed on; and the Neapolitan servants ran hither and thither, closing the windows, and increasing the din and confusion by their shouts, and outcries, and gesticulations. As soon as he had somewhat recovered himself, Morley placed his back against the tree, the large branches of which were waving to and fro like reeds, and gazed out upon the sea. When he

* Let no reader suppose that either the suddenness or the violence of this storm is exaggerated; such is by no means the case.

last looked in that direction, he had seen a vessel, apparently steering from Capri, and sailing gallantly on towards Lorento. He had then regarded it with that indefinite feeling of interest which often attaches to one particular thing, amongst many similar ones, we cannot tell why or wherefore. Perhaps it was a thought which casually struck him that Juliet might be on board of that polacca, which caused him to look at the vessel I have mentioned more intently than any of the rest. But whatever it might be, she had formed a beautiful object in the view, with all sails set, and the last red light of the sun dying her canvas with bright crimson. When he turned his eyes towards her again, however, now that the squall was raging with such fury, he could hardly believe she was the same ship. One of her masts was gone, and seemed to lay over the side, only attached to the vessel by the cordage. It was evident that the crew were taking in sail, and endeavouring to ease her in every way; but while Morley still gazed, the other mast went overboard, and she lay a complete log on the water, with the gale still blowing tremendously and dead upon the shore, and the night coming rapidly on.

Climbing slowly up the stairs in the rock, the boatman, to whom Morley had beckoned, now approached him with difficulty, and the young Englishman, pointing to the vessel in distress, asked if he knew what she was. He replied that she was some Sicilian polacca, and that he had seen her lying off Capri, while they were out sailing in the morning.

"She'll not see another day rise," added the man. "Many a poor sinner has gone to purgatory already to-night. Did you see that felucca upset and go down, sir, just as she was getting round the point?"

"No," answered Morley, "no; but we must not leave that ship to perish. You must get out the boat—I will go off to her."

The man laughed at the very idea. It is true, the wind was blowing dead upon the land, the sea running tremendously high, the gale scarcely abated at all of its fury, the night coming on dark and stormy, and the heavens looking totally unlike the pure, clear, star-lit skies that had hung above them for the last six weeks. While he was still arguing with his master, however, a faint, distant flash, and the booming roar of a gun from the polacca, appealed to the heart of the young Englishman for help; and assuming a

somewhat sterner tone, he bade the man gather together his companions and prepare the boat, in the language of command. He obeyed so far as collecting together the rest of the boatmen went, but no progress was made in getting the boat ready, and they remained drawn into a knot, talking eagerly and gesticulating violently, screaming, shouting, grinning, laughing, and almost weeping, in a manner that can only be seen in Italy.

Morley waited for a minute or two with some impatience, and then approaching them, used every means that the reader may conceive to induce them to accompany him. He succeeded so far, at length, that one of the younger men yielded, and declared he would go, if the padrone would but stay a quarter of an hour to let the wind go down. Such a squall, he said, never lasted long, and at all events it would be more moderate. The consent of one soon brought that of the rest, and Morley ordered them, in the meantime, to make every preparation. Hoping, perhaps, that he would change his purpose, they contrived to extend the quarter of an hour to nearly double that time, notwithstanding all their master's impatience and reiterated commands, while the darkness in-

creased, and gun after gun told the dangerous situation of the vessel, and each showed, by the greater brightness of the flash and loudness of the sound, that she was driving rapidly upon the rocky coast.

At length, however, an effort was made, the boat was pushed out of the cove, and rowed through the calmer water of the little bay. A tremendous sea was still running beyond, although the violence of the wind had certainly somewhat diminished; and old Adam Gray, who, without a word, had watched the proceedings of his master, knowing too well that the attempt to restrain him would be in vain, now, from the top of the rock, gazed at the boat rushing out into the waves, and kept his eyes upon it till it was lost to his sight amidst the dark struggling waters. He tried to catch it again, but in vain: all was dim upon the face of the sea; and then turning his eyes towards the spot where the signals of distress, from time to time, showed the position of the polacca, he remained with his grey hair floating in the wind, and his heart full of sad and anxious apprehensions.

After a time the firing ceased, and the old man muttered to himself—"They have either

reached her, or she has gone down." Then came the longest and most terrible space of expectation. Everything was darkness around; the only sound that interrupted the silence was the fierce rushing of the wind, which still continued to blow with awful fury; the sky at the same time was covered with clouds, so that no light fell upon the waters, and the only sight that met the eyes of old Adam Gray, as he gazed down from above, was the white foaming tops of the waves, which seemed boiling as in a caldron.

"I wonder," he thought, "if I were to pile up a beacon here, whether he would understand what it meant? At all events it would shew him the villa and the rocks, so as to enable him to steer. I will try it at all risks;" and calling to several of the other servants, who were down below looking out as well as himself, he made them gather together a quantity of old wood which had been left in a corner of the vineyard, and, with one or two decayed olive-trees, which had just been cut down, a fire was soon lighted on the extreme verge of the rock, and in about ten minutes spread its red glare far and wide.

Perhaps the good man expected that, be-

sides giving light to any one who might be wandering over the surface of the waters, it would enable him also to see what was passing on the waves below; but in this he was mistaken, and for a quarter of an hour longer he watched in vain. During that time the wind subsided still more, and at length Adam Gray thought he heard his master's voice raised loudly. A moment after, a slight flash, like that of a pistol, was seen in the little bay, and the rocks around echoed with the report.

"Quick! light the torches—light the torches!" cried the old man; and, taking one of the flambeaux which he had brought out, he ran down the steps through the rock, to the place where the boat was usually hauled up. The other servants followed, but before they reached the shore the grating sound of her keel was heard, and the first sight presented to the eyes of Adam Gray was his master, pale and dripping, carrying across the narrow ledge of rock the form of a lady, whose face rested on his shoulder, while her arms were clasped tightly round him.

The blaze of the torches seemed to rouse her, or else it was some words that Morley whispered, for she raised her head, exclaiming—

"Now, now, Morley, set me down! There are others need your care."

"Not yet," said Morley; "not till you are under shelter. This, at least, I have a right to do. Light us up the rock, good Adam; the rest stay here till you have got out the other women. Captain," he added, speaking in Italian to a tall, athletic man, who had sprung to the shore after him—"take care of your own people, and follow us to the villa. Are you sure the other boat went down?"

"I saw it sink," replied the man, in a sad tone; and hurrying on up the steps, with Juliet in his arms, Morley paused not till he had laid her on a sofa in the saloon; then bending down his head he kissed her cheek, saying—"Thank God!" After gazing on her for a moment, he added—"Now I will see to your cousin. I fear she is much worse. Here, my good women," he continued, speaking to the wife of the contadino and her daughters, who had followed him into the house, "there is a lady below who will much want your care. Come with me."

In a few minutes he returned, bearing Lady Malcolm in his arms apparently lifeless. She was soon carried to his own bedroom, and every means were employed to restore her that the

experience of any of the party could suggest. Juliet forgot herself, and all she had suffered in her anxiety for her cousin; but, ere long, she had the happiness to hear her utter a few words of thanks and hope.

"Now leave her with me and her woman," said the wife of the contadino, who had shown skill as well as tenderness in her care of the sufferer; "a few hours sleep will do more for her than anything else. Go with that lady, girls," she continued, speaking to her own daughters; "and find her some clothes, for she is very wet."

Morley led Juliet forth, and then, in the same grave tone in which he had hitherto spoken, besought her to change her dress, and take some refreshment and repose. "I must go myself," he added, "to make sure that there is assistance at hand, in case of any of the poor wretches in the other boat reaching the shore. Though they abandoned you and their companions, we must not abandon them. Farewell, then, for to-night. Lie down to rest. We shall meet again to-morrow—Juliet."

Juliet gazed on him in silence and sadness, but made no reply, and Morley left her.

About an hour was spent by the young Englishman in sending people with lights along the

rocks, but without any result. The boat with which some of the seamen had left the ship, had, as the master of the vessel said, gone down almost immediately, and the bodies of those that it contained were not found for several days.

With a slow and thoughtful step, while the moon began to struggle with the clouds, Morley Ernstein returned to his own dwelling, passed along the corridor, gave some orders to Adam Gray, and entered the saloon. To his surprise, on raising his eyes, he beheld Juliet standing as if watching for his return. Morley paused for a moment, gazed at her with a look full of emotion that could not be spoken; then closed the door, and, advancing, threw his arms around her, and pressed her to his heart. Juliet strove not to withdraw herself, but leaned her face upon his bosom, and wept.

"Juliet," he said, in a low voice, as he felt her heart throbbing against his—"Juliet, we must never part! It is no longer happiness or misery with me, Juliet—it is life or death. You are mine, or no other sun ever rises for me again. Choose, Juliet—choose! The words of fate are upon your lips. If you love me, you are mine—if you love me not, I am nothing!"

"I do—I do!" cried Juliet, throwing her own

arms around him, and speaking with a vehemence that he had never known her use; "I do love you, Morley—I always have loved you—I never loved any but you. Think not you have suffered alone, Morley,—oh, I have indured more than it is possible for human language to declare! Can you doubt that I love you? If you do, tell me how you will have me prove my love, and I am ready to do it, even though the breaking of my vow should break my heart, and destroy me here, as well as bring wrath upon my head hereafter. Speak, Morley—speak!—Love you? Oh, yes! better than any thing on earth—better, I fear, than heaven!"

Morley clasped her closer to his heart, and pressed his lips again and again upon her brow and cheek; they burned, as if with fire. She had asked him what he would have her do, and now he told her, with all the eloquent words of passion. He saw her gaze wildly upon him: he thought that she hesitated. Then all the fell words with which Lieberg had urged him came back to his memory, and he was about to employ their power upon her also—from the tempted to become the tempter!

But happily — oh, most happily for both! Juliet replied, before he had blasted her esteem.

"Say no more, Morley," she said—"say no more—I am yours for ever;" and she put her hand in his. "Oh, Lord God!" she added, "if I sin in breaking the solemn vow I made to those who first gave me life, forgive me in thy mercy! But for him, on whose account I break it, that life which they gave would now be at an end. His is the existence that I henceforth possess, and surely it can be no crime to dedicate it all to him! I will try, Morley," she continued—"I will try to forget that vow that I have made to those who are dead, or to think that I am now exempt from its obligation; yet I fear it will often return to make your Juliet sad, and that my peace of mind will always be disturbed by the thought of a parent's curse."

Morley cast down his eyes, as one bewildered. He gazed thoughtfully on the ground for several moments. He trembled at the feeling of a great escape: and then he murmured—"Here has been some mistake—here has been some mistake! Tell me, Juliet, what was this vow? It cannot be binding on you now, but yet I must hear it."

"Hear it, Morley, and decide for me," said Juliet, with a melancholy look; "the vow is a double one. My mother, Morley, on her

death-bed—after a life of grief and sorrow for having disobeyed her own parent—exacted from me a solemn pledge that I would never become the wife of any man to whom my father forbade me to give my hand. Morley, he did forbid me to unite myself to you. He demanded from me a vow that I would not, on my duty as his child; and his last words were the bitterest—the most awful curse upon my head if I disobeyed."

There was a step in the room, which caused Juliet to turn her head, while Morley, whose face was towards the door, made an impetuous sign to the person who had entered to retire; but old Adam Gray came in with a respectful, but a determined countenance, and Juliet, with a glowing cheek, withdrew herself from Morley's arm.

"I beg your pardon, Sir Morley," cried the old man; "but what I have to say must be said—I can keep it down no longer; I care not whether it offends or not! I have loved you from a boy, sir, and will tell you the truth, even though it make you angry. The young lady that you are talking to—I do not mean to say anything against her—though she has made you unhappy enough, I'm sure."

"Quit the room, Adam Gray!" exclaimed Morley, sternly.

"Not till I've told you, sir," replied the old servant. "I've heard it's her father's will makes her do all this; but she is no more what she fancies herself than I am. Your father always said, sir, that she was not old Carr's daughter, and wished Lady Malcolm—that is, Lady Clavering, as I ought to call her now—to try it with him. That was the cause of the quarrel; for your father said he was a swindler; and, you know, all Mrs. Carr's property went to Lady Malcolm, if she had not a child; and so, when their baby died, he got this young lady up from Sergeant More's wife, who had it to nurse; but the cheat was as plain as possible, for this baby was six weeks old, and the other but a day or two; but as poor Mrs. Carr was so ill that she knew nothing about it, and the baby was brought up by hand, nobody could prove it then, except the nurse and Mrs. More. I can prove it now, however, and that I will, too, let come of it what may."

The old man paused to take breath, for he had spoken with all the eager rapidity of one who, having broken through habitual respect, is fearful lest the impulse which gave him courage

to do so should fail him. The effect produced upon Morley and Juliet, however, was very different from what he expected. At first both seemed bewildered, but then a look of joy and satisfaction inexpressible came upon his master's countenance, and, casting his arms round her he loved, Morley exclaimed—"Mine—mine, Juliet!—you are mine, without a fear and without a regret, without one cloud to shadow the sunshine of our love!"

"Oh, is it—can it be true?" cried Juliet. "Tell me—tell me," she continued, disengaging herself from Morley's embrace, and laying her hand upon the old man's arm—"can you prove it?—can you show, beyond a doubt, that I am not his child? I would give anything—I would give everything—but, alas!" she added, suddenly recollecting herself, "if it be as you say, Adam Gray, I shall have nothing to give—I shall be a beggar, Morley.—Will you value your Juliet less?"

"A thousand-fold more, dearest!" replied her lover. "There was an internal conviction of the truth in my heart, from the very first. I was sure that old man could not be your father —that the same blood never ran in his veins and in yours."

"And whose, then, is the blood that runs in mine?" said Juliet, thoughtfully. "It is strange, Morley—very strange!—and yet I own that I am most thankful to God it is as it is; for amongst many painful things that I have endured through life, one of the most painful has been, a conviction that I was not really an affectionate and tender daughter — that I could not love my father as natural impulse would prompt one to do. Often have I struggled with myself, often have I wept over my own sensations, and have thought that, though he was unkind, and cold, and bitter towards me, if I had really the feelings which a child ought to have, I should forget every sort of harsh and chilling act in filial love. But, oh! I do regret my mother—I do regret my poor mother!—she was always gentle and affectionate, and fond of me."

"Because she *thought* you were her child; and he *knew* you were not his," replied Adam Gray—"that was the cause of the difference, Miss Juliet; and though I can't understand how you and Sir Morley have settled matters, so as to seem very happy at what I feared might make you otherwise, I hope you will forgive me; and as to proving it, I have got Mrs. More's declaration myself, signed with her own hand,

and her daughter has got all the papers which the old woman left at her death. I promised not to say a word till she was dead, and should not, indeed, have told it now, but that I thought you were ill using my poor master, Miss Juliet."

"I hope I have not done so," said Juliet, with a sad smile at the old man's bluntness. "One may sometimes be obliged to make those they love unhappy, without ill using them. Adam Gray, I think you should have known me better. But, however, perhaps now I may have the power of rendering him happy instead. Morley, you seem sad."

"No," answered Morley, "I am not, my beloved; but even in intense joy itself, such as I now experience, there may be a melancholy, Juliet—at all events a pensiveness—there must be, indeed, as long as man feels in his own heart that he is utterly unworthy of the goodness and mercy of God. Together with the sensation of relief and blessing which was given me by the tidings of this night, and the knowledge that you are mine without one shade of regret hanging over our union, came the recollection of how little I had merited such joy, how I had repined and struggled, how many evil acts I had actually been guilty of under the influ-

ence of despair, how many more I might have been tempted to commit, how many I was upon the very eve of plunging into. I must not tell you, Juliet—I cannot tell you all that my words to you this very night implied, before I found what were really the ties that bound you."

"Say not a word, dear Morley—say not a word," replied Juliet, sadly but tenderly; "it has been bitter enough to know that I have been making you wretched as well as myself. What would it be to think that I had plunged you into any evil?"

"It is past, Juliet—it is past!" said Morley; "and though the last year will ever remain upon my memory as one dark and gloomy spot, yet, dear girl, it may be no disadvantage to me to be a humbler man for the rest of my life, from sad experience of my own weakness.—But hark!" he exclaimed, hearing a sound unusual in that remote place; "there is the galloping of a horse's feet. I hope no bad news from Sorrento. Run down and see, good Adam, and bring me word quickly."

CHAPTER XXI.

MORLEY ERNSTEIN had not been alone in watching with eager terror the progress of the storm, and the wreck of the Sicilian Polacca, on the night, with the events of which we have lately been busy. Helen Barham, also, had seen the first effects of the squall, with terror the more intense, because she knew, not only that Juliet must be at that very time upon the waters, but also because she was aware that she must be within a few leagues of the shore of Sorrento, upon which the wind was blowing with such dreadful vehemence. Juliet had written her a note from Capri, where they had paused for an hour or two to see the island, and had even so accurately described the vessel, that Helen had seen and recognised it before the

storm began. Each howl of the gale, when it first commenced, made her heart sink with apprehension; and though there be some people in the world, unfortunately, who may dream that thoughts would come across Helen's mind to check, if not to mitigate her anxiety for her friend, yet be it said, most truly, that Helen only remembered Juliet at that moment as one who had ever been tender and kind, who had been a sister to her when the ties of kindred failed, who had loved her with disinterested love, and soothed her in the time of sorrow and mourning.

As soon as it was possible, notwithstanding the fury of the wind, she went out to the highest point of the coast, though it required all the strength of Harry Martin, and another strong man, to steady her steps. But Helen could not resolve to remain within, while one whom she so dearly loved was perishing amidst the waves; and on the top of the promontory she found a number of Italians, gazing out likewise, with their eyes all fixed upon that vessel — now mastless, and abandoned to the fury of the waters—which was growing dimmer and more dim to their sight, as the beams of day were fading away from the sky. Then came the

signals of distress, and all those terrible moments, ere the polacca was totally hidden by the night. But Helen, though powerless, remained not inactive; she endeavoured, though in vain, to induce the fishermen to put off a boat; she enquired fruitlessly for any persons more venturous than the rest; she offered sums that seemed of incredible magnitude to the poor Sorrentines, for any one who would go forth to give aid to the vessel in distress. None would undertake it; and as the night went on, one by one the people who had been assembled dropped away, and left her standing there, still gazing out into the darkness, but unable to tear herself from the spot.

At length, the same idea struck Harry Martin, which had occurred to old Adam Gray. "In half an hour from this time, madam," he said, "that ship will be upon these rocks. Will it not be better to get a number of men, with torches, all ready to help and save as many of the crew as possible?"

"O, yes, yes!" cried Helen; "fly, by all means, fly, and collect as many as possible. Pay them well, and promise a large reward for every life that is saved. Go quick, my good friend, go quick! I will return to the villa with the courier. I fear I can do no good

here. Never mind me, Martin, but gather the people together, as fast as possible."

According to her orders, Harry Martin left her; and after remaining for about ten minutes more, Helen was turning to go back to her own dwelling, when one of the servants of the villa came up, seeking for her in the darkness, to tell her that some people had been sent over to Sorrento by Sir Morley Ernstein, who entertained some apprehensions regarding her safety. Scarcely had the man spoken, when the dim forms of two or three other persons were seen sauntering up the rocky road, and Helen, somewhat alarmed at what she heard, and not liking their appearance, hastened her steps. She passed another and another, without being able, in the obscurity, to discern their faces; and the sound of footfalls following made her heart beat strangely. At length four men presented themselves, linked arm in arm, and at the same moment a loud whistle was heard from those behind. At that signal an immediate rush was made upon Helen, and those who were with her. The two men were knocked down in an instant; and Helen, caught up by arms which it was in vain to resist, was borne away, shrieking, and calling for help in vain.

"This way, Excellenza, this way!" cried a

voice, in Italian, while the speaker apparently ran on before; "round by this wall, and the back of the houses, or we shall be stopped. Once on the road to Vico, and we are safe. The house you bade us get, is that way—the other men will take care we are not pursued. Here, round to the right, sir."

Helen ceased not, however, to cry for help, as long as strength remained, but it was in vain, and for two miles the man who carried her bore her on with a rapidity that made his own breath come thick and hard. At length, as they were entering what seemed a wilder, and less cultivated part of the country, where the walls of the vineyards and gardens had ceased, and nothing was before them but the hills covered with their odoriferous plants, he paused, saying—"I must stop for a minute. Bid the men make a circle round us."

"Oh!" cried Helen; "for pity's sake let me go. What have I done to injure you? If you will let me go, you shall have any ransom that you name."

"Ransom!" he replied, speaking in English, and in a voice too well known; "half a world should not ransom you, till you become a thing that you yourself loathe and

hate. You scorned my love in England, you scorned it still more bitterly at Rome, but now I have you amongst these wild hills, and the God that delivers you, will be a God indeed! Come on, my men, come on!" he continued, "see, the moon is breaking through the clouds, and the wind is going down; we are still too near the houses.—Come on, quick, I say; I think I hear a horse's feet."

Helen heard the same sound, and shrieked aloud for aid, but help did not come; they hurried her on: the echo of the horse's feet died away, and Lieberg said, in a bitter tone—"He hears not the sweet music; or, like the deaf adder, he stoppeth his ear to the song of the charmer. Your mode of journeying is unpleasant, perhaps; it will soon be over, lady, so content yourself for a time."

When he had gone about a quarter of a mile farther, however, a distant noise met the ears of the whole party, not like the noise of one horse's feet, but as if there were many, coming up at the full gallop by the same path which they were pursuing. Helen found her persecutor's arms clasped more tightly round her, while his pace grew still more rapid, and, confirmed by these signs in the faint hope she

entertained of assistance being near, she again called aloud for help.

"Tie this over her mouth," cried one of the men, giving Lieberg a handkerchief; "they cannot trace us here, unless her screams bring them up."

"That accursed moon will betray us," exclaimed Lieberg. "Cannot we get down into the hollow way?"

"They will hem us in there," cried the man. "By the body of Bacchus, they have got round, and are before us! Bend down, Excellenza, bend down!—Curse that screaming! I will drive my knife into her!"

"Here, take her," cried Lieberg. "We shall have to fight them.—Call up some of the men from behind.—Tie her, and keep her here!—They cannot be so many as we are. We will soon disperse them.—Here come three, right down upon us—call up some of the men from behind, I say!"

The man to whom he spoke uttered the same loud whistle that Helen had heard before, but at that very moment two or three shots were heard from the ground which they had just passed over, and then a whole volley, while the three horsemen, who had galloped on and in-

tercepted Lieberg's farther progress, caught sight of him by the clear moonlight, and were coming down at full speed.

"Huzza! we have them—we have them!" cried the voice of Harry Martin.—"In God's name, leave him to me, Sir Morley.—You look to the lady."

But as he spoke, two of Lieberg's hired ruffians rushed up, in that picturesque, and never-to-be-mistaken costume which the Italian bandits have affected, with the ribands on their hats floating wildly in the gale, and their long guns carried easily in their hands.

"We cannot help you," they cried—"we cannot help you; they are too many for us. Bertolo is down, and so is Marino."

"But strike one stroke," exclaimed Lieberg, furiously; "here are but three before us."

"But there are twenty behind," answered one of the men. "However, here goes;" and, raising his gun to his shoulder, he fired.

His companion followed his example, the very moment after, and instantly one of their opponents went down, horse and man together. Another horse reared and plunged, but darted forward again with a staggering pace, and the horseman finding that the beast was wounded,

sprang to the ground, and cast away the rein. The other man, who had fallen also, started up, and two of Lieberg's companions, each taking a separate way, turned and fled. The man who still remained mounted was turning his rein to pursue them, but the voice of Morley Ernstein stopped him, exclaiming—"This way—this way! There stands the villain himself. I know him but too well."

"This for you, Sir Morley Ernstein," shouted Lieberg, levelling a pistol, and firing at the same moment.

Morley staggered back, but the ball, discharged from too great a distance, only hurt him slightly, and the next moment he darted forward again.

"Shall I kill her?" cried the Italian, who stood beside Lieberg.

His master paused for a single instant, then caught Helen up again in his arms, asking—"The cliff is near, is it not?" and without waiting a reply, he ran with the swiftness of lightning up the side of the hill. The moon was now shining clear, as I have said, and the whole party beheld and followed him. The man on horseback contrived to turn him once, as a greyhound does a hare, but neither Morley nor Harry Martin,

though, by their companion's manœuvre, they gained upon him considerably, dared to fire for fear of hitting Helen.

At length Lieberg paused, but it was only on the very verge of the rock overlooking the sea; and there he stood, laughing aloud with the peculiar mocking laugh which always marked that he thought he had won the day. His tall, magnificent form was seen clear and distinct by the moonlight, and Morley and those who were with him, not three paces distant, could even distinguish his features and the look of dark and savage triumph by which they were animated.

"Keep back, Sir Morley Ernstein," he cried, "and hear a word or two! When first we met, I felt that the fate of one of us depended on the other. You have me at bay, but I have my advantage too. If you drive me over this precipice, you not only destroy a woman who loves you, but you kill your own brother—ay! your father's son, Sir Morley, by a lady of higher rank than your own low-born dam. Have you any scruples of fraternal tenderness?—I have none!" and at the same moment he clasped Helen tightly round the waist with his left arm, and stretched out his right with a second pistol in the act to fire.

Ere he could draw the trigger, however, with a bound, which cleared the intervening space in an instant, Harry Martin was upon him. One powerful arm was cast round Helen, tearing her from her persecutor; the other pressed a pistol right into Lieberg's ear.—The cock fell—there was a flash and a report; and, reeling back, with Helen in his arms, from the edge of the precipice, over which he had nearly fallen in his effort to rescue her, the hardy Englishman exclaimed—"I have saved you—by G—, I have saved you!"

And where was Lieberg? He had disappeared; and though Sir Morley Ernstein caused long and diligent search to be made for his body under the cliffs upon the following morning, it was nowhere to be found. The sea did not approach near enough to have washed it away; none of the peasants or fishermen had seen or heard of it; and the only thing that could give any indication of his fate, was a drop or two of blood on the spot where he had stood.

CHAPTER XXII.

THERE are few sensations that affect the heart of man which are more impressive, I might almost say sublime, than those which he feels when he wakes from the first sleep that is afforded to him after strange and stirring events, when some vast change has been effected, when some great result has been achieved. During that dark and terrible night—that night so full of joy and pain, which we have spoken of in the last chapter, Morley Ernstein obtained but little refreshing repose. Much confusion and agitation took place in his own dwelling after he returned thither with Helen Barham; and the emotions of joy, we all know, are not less exciting than even those of grief.

The meeting between Juliet and Helen was

in itself affecting to both, and equally so to him who witnessed it; but Helen Barham was the same as she had always been—generous and enthusiastic in her affections, and thinking far less of herself than others. When Morley, indeed, led her into the room where Juliet waited his return with anxious expectation, her heart fluttered, and her lips murmured a few words which might perhaps be prayer; but she cast her arms round her friend, and told her all the terror and the anguish she had felt while uncertain of her fate upon the sea.

"But now," she added, after the events which had just taken place upon the hill had been related to their fair auditor—"from all I see, and from a few words which he has spoken, dear Juliet, I believe I may thank God, not only for saving you from destruction, but for restoring you fully to him towards whom I am such a debtor. To see you two happy will be the greatest of happiness to me, for, indeed, I may well say that I love you both, better than any beings on this earth; and I am very sure, as no one can ever confer such benefits upon me as you have done, so will no one ever arise even to share in that affection which is your due from me."

In conversation such as this, and in enquiries, explanations, and arrangements, two or three hours passed after Morley's return, and it wanted but a short time of the dawn when he laid his head down to rest. Thought occupied that space, and the sky was growing grey with the approach of daylight, when sleep fell upon the young Englishman's eyes. He slept for about two hours, then rose, and went out to gaze over the sea. All was calm and tranquil. The storm which had swept the waters on the preceding evening had passed away; sunshine, and brightness, and tranquillity, had returned; and Morley could not help finding a symbol in the atmospheric changes of that night, of the workings of his own fate, which had just taken place. He felt that a tempest had swept over him, had passed, and had left a calm to come back again and soothe his heart. He raised his voice to God, and thanked him for the infinity of his mercies.

Morley Ernstein had yet more to be grateful for than perhaps he already knew; but he was quite satisfied with his fate, and sought to enquire no farther. He comprehended easily how, with rash haste, he had concluded that Juliet had become Lady Clavering, and would

have asked no farther questions on a subject, the very memory of which was painful to him, had not the good Countess herself, with her usual kindly simplicity, thought it right to explain to her young friend—as soon as she could get down, on the day following the shipwreck—all the reasons and motives of her marriage with Lord Clavering.

"I dare say you, my dear Morley," she said, "and a great number of other people, thought it a very silly thing for an old woman like myself to do, and perhaps for my good lord also; but we have known each other for some thirty years, and have seen each other at periods of great grief for the loss of those we loved better than we shall ever love again. We both found ourselves somewhat solitary in life; and therefore, when I saw that Juliet here had made up her mind to give her hand to you, I listened to the proposal of Lord Clavering, though I had some time before hesitated to agree to it. You may be very sure, my dear Morley, that neither wealth nor station was my object; for though my income was a very limited one, I always made it answer my purposes, and, at all events, it was as great as my ambition."

"Had you waited a little," said Morley,

looking at Juliet with a smile, "your fortune would have been much increased."

Lady Clavering was surprised, but the tale was soon told, and Adam Gray himself sent for, to explain the whole. He now repeated what he had said the night before; but as proof of his assertions, he produced a paper which the widow of Sergeant More had signed, as the reader may recollect, when she was journeying over with him and her daughter to Doncaster. By this she acknowledged that, shortly after her arrival in England, whither she had come after leaving her husband with the army, she had taken up her abode in a small Yorkshire village, between Morley Court and Yelverly, with three children of her own, and one infant, the daughter of an officer in the Austrian service, which she had brought from the Continent, leaving its father dying, and its mother dead. She had received some kindness from the father of Sir Morley Ernstein on her first arrival, and he had seen the infant she brought. But before she had been a week in the cottage she inhabited, Mr. Carr himself came down one night in haste, and concluded with her a bargain, by which, for the sum of two hundred pounds, and the promise of future pro-

tection and support, she gave up to him the infant which she had brought to England, and, taking the dead child in its place, pretended that her little charge had fallen sick and expired. The motive assigned by Mr. Carr for his part of this proceeding was, that his wife would go distracted if she found her child had died. But Mrs. More soon began to hear rumours of a different sort; Sir Morley Ernstein's father came down to her, and with kindly, though serious admonitions, besought her to tell the truth in regard to the death of the child, as a considerable property was at stake. Mr. Carr himself ultimately acknowledged the fact to her; but by payment of a second sum, and obtaining her husband's promotion, induced her to go with Sergeant More to India, where she remained for eighteen or nineteen years.

Such were the contents of the paper which Adam Gray now read; but Jane Martin, he said, possessed all the more important documents, and she was soon brought from Sorrento, to throw what light she could upon the case. She produced four curious documents, perfectly sufficient to confirm all that the old man had asserted. The first was another clear statement by Mrs. More herself, precisely similar in

all material points to the other: it was drawn up by her own hand, signed and witnessed. The next was an acknowledgment of the facts which she had extracted from Mr. Carr before she would consent to leave England. The third, was a certificate, in German, of the birth of Juliet Willoughby; and the fourth, a letter from her father, Captain Willoughby, to the rector of some parish in Yorkshire, recommending the child to his care, and begging him to interest the writer's elder brother in the poor orphan. On this letter was written, in Mrs. More's hand—"The rector had died of the fever before I got to England."

"Shew me those two last papers," cried Lady Clavering, as Morley read them aloud; "let me see them, Morley—let me see them! Juliet, my dear child," she continued, casting her arms around her, after she had read and re-read the papers, "if you have lost one father, you have found another—that Captain Willoughby is my husband!"

It were needless to trouble the reader with farther explanations, or to ask his permission, like the vanquished party after a battle, "to bury our dead." If he will turn to the first part of this volume, he will see the reference made by

Lord Clavering himself—which, probably, he skipped at the time, as being irrelevant to the history before him—to some of the circumstances of his early life, and I can afford him no farther information, not possessing any myself. Suffice it, that nobleman, on his arrival at Naples, about a fortnight afterwards, held Juliet to his heart, and wept over her as a long-lost child; and that without any tedious delay, he united his daughter to the man whom she had always loved.

For Morley, he was happier than even imagination, warmed by love and expectation, had been able to paint; and with Juliet by his side, let it be said, the good "Tenant of the Heart," the high, the holy, and the pure—the spirit of the soul, maintained a perpetual sway over her more earthly comrade.

Some five or six years after the period of this tale, the two cottages, which we have described as seated in the little glen near Warmstone Castle, appeared thrown into one, decorated with shrubs and flowers, and, generally, with three or four rosy children running about the doors. From the little garden-gate every morning, half an hour after sun-rise, might be seen to ride forth a very powerful man, growing, perhaps,

a little heavy withal, but mounted on a stout Yorkshire horse, well fitted to carry him. The labourers and tenants touched their hat to the steward; and, though with a wary and a watchful eye he perambulated the property, seeing that no injustice was done to his beloved mistress, yet all the people on the land declared that Mr. Martin was a kind, good man; that he was tender to the poor, charitable to all, liberal to the active and industrious, and, above all things, clement, and no way harsh to an unconfirmed wrong-doer; for he himself well knew, that, whatever magistrates or lawgivers may say, *Mercy has power to reclaim.*

And of her, the mistress of the mansion, what have we to tell? That Helen remained Helen Barham still, in mind, in character, as well as in name. If there was regret resting as a shade upon her mind, if there was disappointment amongst the memories of the heart, the pure, high spirit veiled them from all eyes; and though I must not say she *struggled with* them —for there was nothing like contention in her breast, after Juliet and Morley were once united —yet she *repressed* all selfish feelings, and saw the happiness that their union produced with a bright, though grave, tranquillity. She laid

out for herself, from that moment, her course of life. In the fair and calm abode which seemed to have been prepared expressly for her, she passed her future years in diffusing happiness and sunshine round her. The cottage knew her step well; and a class above that found her a kind and indulgent lady, healing all wounds, reconciling all differences, and silencing clamour and complaint. It was very seldom throughout the whole neighbourhood, that sweet smile, and that soft voice, would not prevail, even where every harsher means had been tried in vain. She was a good neighbour, too, and a good friend; and her beauty, her extraordinary beauty, remained undiminished for many years. It was as if the pure and noble spirit had a balmy and preserving influence even upon her corporeal frame. There is one thing strange, however, in regard to her fate; though many admired the lovely woman, and many coveted the hand of the wealthy heiress, no one ever ventured to ask that boon of Helen Barham.

Several years afterwards she besought Juliet to allow her to adopt one of her children, and make him heir of the property which had once been his father's. The boy spent

several months with her in each succeeding year; and once—but only once—as he looked up with a bright and beaming smile in Helen's face, while she parted the beautiful hair upon his brow, her eyes filled with tears, and she clasped him to her bosom, with emotions that could not be restrained.

And Lieberg! Was nothing, then, ever heard of him? Can one form no conjecture, backed by sufficient probabilities, of his real fate?

Reader, his body was never found; but his spirit, alas! still lives, and pervades too many a scene, blasting with its presence what otherwise might be bright. Happy is the man who has not a Lieberg always very, very near him!

Where?

In his own heart!

THE END.

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